

A HISTORY OF
**SWEDISH
BROADCASTING**

*Communicative ethos, genres
and institutional change*



Edited by **Monika Djerf-Pierre & Mats Ekström**



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A History of Swedish Broadcasting

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NORDICOM

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Monika Djerf-Pierre & Mats Ekström (eds.)

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Radiolyssnarna [The radio listeners]. Owned by Sveriges Radios Förvaltnings
AB, hanging in the radio broadcast building.

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Foreword

The overall aim of this book is to describe and analyse formative features and trajectories in the history of Swedish broadcasting. The 15 chapters include analyses of communicative innovations, institutional arrangements, audience orientations and modes of address, norms and practices in broadcast production, the development of different genres, and the relationship between broadcasting and society. We have attempted to offer new and exciting findings based on a combination of detailed analyses of concrete examples and descriptions of general trends and changes.

The book derives from a large-scale research programme on Swedish broadcasting history that has been underway since 1993. An impressive body of empirical studies has been published (altogether 49 books, several CDs and DVDs), covering a great variety of topics, genres and periods. With a few exceptions, this research has not previously been published for a non-Swedish audience. In this book, selected parts of this research are presented. Clearly, a single volume cannot summarize all these studies or capture the development of broadcasting in all its aspects, and there are several studies in the project not represented in this book. We hope, however, that the book will give some insight into the development of radio and television in Sweden and also provide opportunities for making international comparisons. The book is intended for the academic community, for practitioners in journalism and media production, as well as for a general audience with an interest in media and history.

The research and writing of the book were made possible thanks to an initiative from the Swedish Foundation of Broadcast Media History and funding from the public service corporations Swedish Radio, Swedish Television and the Swedish Educational Broadcasting Company, the private broadcasting corporation TV4, and the distributor Teracom. We are also particularly grateful to the Foundation Committee, to Göran Elgemyr and Margareta Cronholm for useful comments and practical support, and to Karin Poulsen and Ulla Carlsson

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Monika Djerf-Pierre and Mats Ekström

Department of Journalism, Media and Communication
University of Gothenburg

Introduction

Chapter 1

Approaching Broadcast History

An introduction

Mats Ekström & Monika Djerf-Pierre

In recent decades, we have seen significant scholarly interest in the history of broadcasting. Numerous books and articles have been published (e.g. Corner 2003; Hilmes 2002; Wheatley 2007). This is hardly surprising. Radio and television constitute central features of 20th and 21st century modern society and they have a distinct history as media systems, cultural forms and communication that we now have excellent opportunities to analyse in retrospect (Crisell 2001: 3). Studies of broadcast history in different countries make it possible to compare and identify both general aspects and contextual specificities in terms of how broadcast communication has been formed and developed. The rationale for this research is not only to learn more about radio and television history as such, but also to explore general aspects of media and communication in society. The question of what constitutes different media and how have they developed into distinct (and changing) forms of social interactions, institutions and cultural practices needs to be posed (Hilmes, Newcomb & Meehan 2012).

Detailed historical studies offer indispensable data for analyses of the conditions necessary for technological innovations, relations between technologies and cultural forms, the institutional arrangements of communication media and their relations with other institutions, general practices of audience orientation, and the evolution of aesthetic forms, discourses and genres. The fact that broadcasting is undergoing quite radical transformations in the 2000s and that the established forms of television are facing serious challenges from new technologies and changing patterns of media use (Spigel & Olsson 2004; Turner & Tay 2009) make these historical inquiries even more significant.

The overall question explored in this book is how broadcast media have been developed as *forms of public communication*. The analyses focus on two basic and interrelated aspects of broadcast as public communication. Firstly, the communication and social relationships created between broadcasters and audiences. Radio and television are live mass media unique in their communi-

cation over distance and interconnections of public and private spaces. Over time, broadcasters have utilized and experimented with available technologies, developed genres, communication styles and forms of audience address in order to bridge the distance and make certain audience experiences possible. Immediacy, intimacy, co-presence and dialogue have been created in relation to multiple audiences (Crisell 2001:4; Peters 1999: 211; Scannell 1996, 2000).

The second aspect concerns broadcasting as social and cultural institutions. Radio and television have evolved as specific institutions with goals and orientations, and with specific relations to audiences and other institutions in society. The societal significance of the public spaces and discourses created in radio and television is hard to overestimate (cf. Hilmes 2002: 4; Thompson 1995). Socio-cultural universes – identities, practices, norms, values and tastes – have continuously been offered to audiences in their homes, through programmes produced in professional and institutionalized practices and media genres. Programmes have been created in relation to democratic and commercial logics and ambitions. And as is shown in previous research, the history of public service broadcasting is essentially a history of the institution's changing understandings of, and orientations to, the audiences (Coleman and Ross 2010; Scannell and Cardiff 1991). A central aspect, also explored in this book, is for example the intellectual and educating paternalistic attitude in early broadcasting, a voice from above that was later generally abandoned in favor of more sociable relationships (e.g. chapter 5).

This book is divided into five broad themes: the innovations of radio and television, audience orientation, media professionals, broadcast genres, and institutional changes. These themes have been selected to capture significant aspects of broadcasting as public communication. It is through technological innovations, institutional arrangements, professional practices, and programme genres that radio and television have been formed. What pervades all these practices is the overall orientation to audiences. We follow a perspective most clearly developed in Scannell and Cardiff's (1991) research on broadcast history:

But broadcasting is not simply a content ... It embodies, always, a communicative intention which is the mark of a social relationship. Each and every programme is shaped by considerations of the audience, is designed to be heard or seen by absent listeners or viewers. Programmes are the highly determinate end-products of broadcasting, the point of exchange between the producing institutions and society. In their form and content they bear the marks of institutional assumptions about the scope and purpose of broadcasting and about the audiences for whom they are made. ... The social relations of production and consumption – as between institutions, programmes and audiences – embody the emerging character and impact of broadcasting on modern societies. (p. xi)

Scannell (1989) has also introduced the concept of the *communicative ethos* of radio and television, to characterize the rather distinct forms of audience orientation – inclusiveness, familiarity, ordinariness etc. – that have evolved over time in the policies of the broadcasting institutions, in the production of programs and communicative styles. The chapters in this book describe both general and changing aspects of the communicative ethos of Swedish radio and television. To understand how communicative ethos have been shaped over time, it is crucial, we argue, to analyze the *audience relationships* embedded and achieved in concrete practices, as well as the *relations between the broadcast institution and other institutions in society*.

Media history is a multidisciplinary field of research, constituting a sub-discipline of media studies and (cultural) history (e.g. Dahl 1994; Drotner 2011). Although there are no clear boundaries between those traditions, there is a difference between studying media as part of historical inquiry on the one hand, and exploring history in order to enrich our knowledge about broadcast communication and its developments on the other. This book is primarily a study of broadcast communication, and most chapters are written by researchers in media and communication (and related disciplines such as film studies). The authors combine in-depth analyses of concrete periods in the history of Swedish broadcasting with analyses of general questions concerning broadcasting as a medium and form of public communication (cf. Wheatley 2007: 2).

Media history is a dynamic field, with intense discussions concerning the historiography, the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches. What assumptions and understandings of media and history are built into the empirical research? What phenomena, relations and processes is it possible to illuminate, and what is neglected, depending on the approaches applied? These are questions discussed in the literature (Bondebjerg 2002; Corner 2003; Dahl 1994; Drotner 2011; Hilmes, Newcomb & Meehan 2012; Johnson & Fickers 2010; Nicholas 2012; Wheatley 2007). In this introduction, we will first briefly discuss the approaches to broadcast history applied in this book. Thereafter, we introduce the general themes and questions focused on in the chapters.

Approaches to broadcast history: some arguments and conclusions

This book is part of what can be characterized as the *History of...* literature in media history. Common to a great number of studies in the field is the overall ambition to cover the development of particular forms of media and communication in socio-cultural – and most often national – contexts. This approach is often announced in the title of the publications, as in, for example, Briggs' (1995) *The History of Broadcasting in the United Kingdom*, Scannell and Cardiff's

(1991) *A Social History of British Broadcasting*, Shudson's (1978) *Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers*, Gomery's (2008) *A History of Broadcasting in the United States*, and Briggs and Burke's (2010) *A Social History of the Media*. The *history of* approach is applied to phenomena of different scales, from specific genres and technologies to the media in general. Although this literature includes a variety of theoretical perspectives, it stands out from the wide-ranging research in which aspects of mediated communication are explored from historical perspectives without any ambitions to write the (or a) *history of* something.

The strength of the large-scale studies on the history of broadcasting is that they have provided comparable overviews and also detailed analyses about the *emergence and development* of broadcast media in different social and cultural contexts. How radio and television were formed, how broadcast communications have changed over time, what has driven change and with what consequences, are general questions that motivate this vein of historical research. There are, of course, a number of challenges associated with such an endeavour. As Corner (2003) puts it, "the multifarious nature of 'television' as an object of critical and sociological study ... complicates historical engagement with it" (p. 275). In this book, we approach broadcasting as technologies, institutions, professional culture and practices, forms of communication and genres. These aspects are interrelated but they also have their own contexts of influences and trajectories. Broadcast history thus requires different theoretical approaches, focusing on institutional change as well as the evolution of discourse, genres and aesthetics (Bignell & Fickers 2008: 1; Bondebjerg 2002). The ambition of this book is, however, not delimited to the analyses of *historical development and trajectories*. We hope to show how historical approaches contribute to a general understanding of how technological innovation and practices of broadcast communication are *embedded in* broader societal and institutional contexts.

Periodisation

Another challenge concerns the periodisation and the possible identification of formative periods in historical research (Corner 2003: 277). In several chapters in this book, the analyses are organized in relation to periods. The grouping of data in periods can help to provide comprehensive overviews, but the theoretical and explanatory claims of the periodisations vary. Comparing different chapters in the book, the reader can identify arguments relating to formative periods in which important changes in Swedish broadcasting occurred. We should bear in mind that all categorizations are heuristic devices that can both clarify and obstruct, and that periodisations are not the only way to understand historical changes. However, the chapters in this book make a strong case for the examination of historical change being seen in terms of formative periods.

There has always been a great degree of path-dependency in broadcasting, i.e. a tendency of past practices to continue even though the circumstances have changed and alternatives are available. Longer periods of stability have been followed by shorter periods of transformative change, and when change has come it has rarely been only due to a single event or cause but been brought about by a number of interacting factors. There are indeed critical moments (or junctures) when external and internal forces come together and propel transformative institutional changes.

Altogether, the chapters that discuss the historical periodisation of broadcasting identify essentially the same formative periods and/or critical moments in history, despite their thematic differences. The first and most obvious formative period was the start of radio and the formation of Radiotjänst as a national radio broadcaster in the mid-1920s. The basic principle that radio (and later television) was to be regarded as a common good and that factuality and impartiality was to govern programme production were already established in this early phase and they are still essential to the institutional logic of PSB (Public Service Broadcasting).

A second important formative period was in the 1950s, where the broadcasting-institution as such grew in societal influence and authority and started to 'liberate' itself from the previous paternalistic norms. This coincided with the start of television and the expansion of the consumer society which in turn opened up the popularization of programme formats and content, an increasing orientation towards the audience, and a greater focus on 'entertainment' in both radio and television.

The professionalization of programme production in the 1960s and the 1970s is the third and probably the most influential transformative phase of all with regard to the communicative ethos of public broadcasting. The pursuit of professional independence, the evolution of a critical and scrutinizing ideal in the documentary genres, and the notion that radio and television is obliged to fulfill a democratic mission, had an impact that surpasses 'journalism' per se. This professionalization interacted with a growing social criticism and a turn to the left in cultural and political debate and the new critical stance affected not only news and current affairs journalism but also other genres such as entertainment and sport. Professionalization entailed a greater independence for producers, and it is shown in several of the chapters of the book that the freedom of the Swedish television producers in the early 1970s was probably the greatest in the world. Not even in Norway and Denmark had the programme producers the same leeway to choose what programmes to make and how to interpret reality.

The era of the deregulation of broadcasting and the introduction of commercial competition is the last of the formative periods identified in this book. Although Sweden retained one of the most long-lived public service monopo-

lies in the world, when PSB finally faced commercial competition the public broadcaster managed very well in retaining its position in terms of maintaining audience attention, public trust and political support for continued funding. Public service broadcasting managed to preserve its leading public role, despite the deregulation and commercialization of the media system.

* * *

The debate about media historiography has drawn attention to possible drawbacks in the *history of* projects that this book can reasonably be said to represent. The risk is that such projects develop into what Dahl (1994) describes as ‘particular histories of particular media’, bounded to particular nations and institutional arrangements (Bondebjerg 2002) and with limited relevance for a more general media history (Nicholas 2012). This raises some important questions that we will briefly discuss under the following headings: broadcast history as (1) a ‘this is what happened’ history, (2) a one medium history, and (3) a national history.

A ‘this is what happened’ history

The project of which this book forms a part is one of several almost parallel media history projects in the Scandinavian countries. As Bondebjerg (2002) notes, these projects share an ambition to ‘construct a more coherent national media history’ (p. 61). In his analysis, Bondebjerg clearly illustrates the challenges of such an endeavour, as there are so many relevant histories to explore. Based on a distinction between three general dimensions (social and institutional; aesthetic and cultural-symbolic; everyday culture), he identifies important areas for future research. Bondebjerg (2002) is entirely correct in arguing that there is ‘a great deal to be done’ (p. 77) in spite of the very ambitious projects and the great number of individual studies. It is, however, important to note that this is not to say that research should aim to cover the history of media. To our opinion, the mission for future research is not primarily to fill in the empirical gaps left by the existing large-scale projects but to engage in theoretically driven empirical research, in critical explorations and reinterpretations of existing data and studies (cf. Hilmes 2002: 3).

A related challenge in the *history of* approach is to avoid that research in practice turns into epistemologically naive *this is what happened stories* about the past. It is a legitimate rationale and a necessary endeavour in media history to document and describe the past. Media history consists of a digging into the archives, scrutinizing documents and organizing large amounts of data, and of course we also have to ask the question: what happened? Nonetheless, to quote Meehan (in Hilmes, Newcomb & Meehan 2012) from a recent panel discussion on the histories of television, “... what we know about the past is

different from the past itself. And that is one of the things that makes television's past so interesting" (p. 285).

To go beyond a 'this is what happened approach' in broadcast history is not only an epistemological matter. It concerns the overall aim of research, i.e. exploring and analysing dimensions of broadcasting, rather than summarizing and reconstructing historical events and trajectories (cf. Brinson 2005: 2). As Fickers (2009) notes, research into the history of television has in the last decade moved "from a reconstruction of the past based on written archives to a more integral historiography of television, translated in a serious attention for the audiovisual tradition of the medium" (p. 568). A similar conclusion is drawn by Corner (2003, p. 273) who argues that, internationally, scholars in media history have been intensively engaged in questions about the 'cultural character' and the development of 'generic forms' of television, rather than descriptive chronicles of technological innovations, the development of organizations and policies. We would like to see this book as part of that trend.

A one medium history

In the debate about media historiography, scholars have called for more integrated approaches, focusing on media systems and the interconnections between media (Bondebjerg 2002; Dahl 1994; Nicholas 2012). Nicholas (2012: 380) notes that different media are still usually treated separately in historical research, resulting in 'parallel histories of individual mediums' and limited knowledge about intermediality and broader media cultures. We agree that this is an important challenge for media history. However, this does not mean that integration is always better than separation. Research on particular media vs. intermediality and media cultures answers different but equally significant research questions. Nicholas (2012) sees more arguments for not analysing media separately and argues that in 'the modern era there are very few events or issues – if any at all – that can be understood with references to just a single mass medium' (p. 390), and he adds that people rarely experience events in relation to separate medium'. This is in many ways true. However, radio and television also have their own (rather distinct) features, affordances, forms of use and related social practices and interaction (Thompson 1995), as well as distinct histories (Wheatley 2007: 2). The arguments for studying broadcasting separately are not only based on the centrality of broadcasting in 20th century social, cultural and political life, but also on the fact that radio and television share unique communicative properties and ways of organizing public communication. On the other hand, in order to understand the development of the various aspects of broadcasting, we of course have to explore its relation to other media. This is illustrated in several of the chapters in this book.

A national history

This book is about *Swedish* broadcast history. Similar projects aiming for coherent analyses of national broadcast histories have been conducted in a number of countries (see e.g. Briggs 1961; Bondebjerg 2002; Hilmes 2002; Scannell & Cardiff 1991; Wheatley 2007), which now provide many opportunities for cross-national comparisons. To some extent, the analyses of the Swedish case in this book relate to experiences from other countries, but the development of more systematic comparisons is a project for future research (cf. Bignell & Fickers 2008; Bondebjerg 2002; Wood 2000).

In the debate about media historiography, scholars have also raised a more general question concerning the relevance of a national approach to broadcast history. An understanding of broadcasting as a medium of the nation state might imply that both transnational flows and local variations are left outside (Johnson & Fickers 2010). Dahl (2002) argues that national studies have become too narrow because the media themselves have become more transnational. An example mentioned is the distribution of programme formats.

Broadcasting in Sweden, as in other countries, has clearly developed mainly through national projects, as part of national cultures (e.g. Hilmes 2002: 11). At the same time, these national media systems and cultures have been dependent on international influences and interrelationships throughout history. In a study of the early decades of British radio, Hilmes (2007) notes that American networks and the BBC "kept a close eye on each other, frequently borrowing programming ideas, evaluating each other's institutional practices and using the other as a conceptual counterweight in policy debates" (p. 5). In this book, the authors have tried to employ comparative perspectives and have examined the Swedish case with some outlooks to what took place in other countries at the same time. In using this approach, it is evident that Swedish broadcasting has always been part of the international trajectories with regard to changes in the organization, technologies, genres of broadcasting, the forms of media talk and aesthetics. Swedish broadcasters have always looked to other countries for innovations and have imported ideas and formats from abroad. It is thus no surprise that there are numerous parallels to be found to the development of broadcasting in other countries. The similarities are greatest with regard to the Nordic countries and the British BBC, but despite the fact that the commercial model for radio of the U.S was deemed unsuitable for the constitution of Swedish broadcasting-radio in the 1920s, the influence from U.S. broadcasting also grew over time. However, the chapters in the book also highlight some of the specificities in the Swedish case.

Clearly, the transnationalisation of broadcasting has increased in many central and interrelated aspects of media institutions (finance, technology, distribution, aesthetics, discourses, etc.). At the same time, radio and television are still to a large extent domestic media, organized and designed for national audiences,

contributing to national identities and publics. The interrelations between the national and transnational should be taken into consideration in both national media histories and cross-national comparative research.

Themes and topics

A prerequisite for a study of Swedish broadcast history to be relevant for media history and media studies is of course that the study engages with general questions. The chapters in this book are organized in relation to five broad themes, presented below. Each chapter explores different aspects of the *historical development* of Swedish radio and television, as well as more *generic aspects of broadcast communication*. As a final part of this introduction we present the chapters in summary.

Innovations: technologies for broadcast communication

Previous studies of innovations in radio and television show how those media have been formed in different institutional contexts (Briggs 1961; Gomery 2008; Hilmes 2002; Scannell & Cardiff 1991). There are similarities between how the technological innovations and affordances were developed into media systems and cultural forms, but there are also differences related to national historical cultures, political traditions and economic structures. The early days of radio and television are formative periods with long-term impact on broadcasting. A significant aspect of the formative period is how particular ideas about the audience were implemented in the institutional arrangements and early programmes. Three chapters in the book deal specifically with this theme.

In Chapter 2, Lennart Weibull analyses the invention of radio and television in Sweden, with a focus on how these media were organized, why this was done in this way and what implications this had. Weibull shows how actors from different fields were involved in developing technological systems into institutionalized and public service-based broadcasting. Concrete considerations and negotiations are described. Important aspects of the formative periods in the 1920s and the 1950s are the profiles, objectives and policies of early programming and the related understandings of the audiences. The orientation to audiences in early radio also involved concrete correspondence with the listeners. In comparing the introduction of radio and television, Weibull identifies important differences. The introduction of radio was mainly technology-based and part of a modernization process. The introduction of television was more programme-based and marked by its integration into the welfare state of the 1950s. As public spaces, radio and television also had somewhat different relations with society. Radio was, Weibull argues, a more “official space, filled with

official people, and tended to lecture, while television developed as a more democratic medium, which offered not only education but also light entertainment, and was ‘increasingly filled with ordinary people’.”

The innovations in early radio are further analysed by Göran Elgemyr in Chapter 3, with a particular focus on how technologies and devices were invented, used and experimented on. Elgemyr presents a number of examples of how the qualities of communication, the forms of talk and live experiences, were gradually improved in a combination of technological innovations and refined communicative styles. The chapter thus deals with the general question of how the structural distance between sender and receiver in mass communication is bridged in the social relations created between speakers and recipients. The live experiences made possible in early radio were partly the result of a creative exploration of the affordances of various interrelated devices. Live broadcasting involved the complex coordination of different activities. Elgemyr illustrates the significant implementation of new technologies such as microphones, amplifiers, studio acoustics, and recording and editing equipments. Among the most exciting innovations described is the first recording car, which expanded the geographical and cultural space of the listeners in the 1930s. Elgemyr also describes the collaborations between technicians and programme producers and how the organization of these activities has changed over time.

The way in which the structure of broadcasting has been formed in relation to technological innovations and affordances is also the overall question in Nina Wormbs’ chapter 4, *From Wire to Satellite*, but here the focus shifts towards distribution technologies and to the two cases of wired radio in the post-war period and the satellite broadcasting of the 1980s. Wormbs shows how a national broadcast system was created, anchored in a public service ideology, in the context of international technological developments and institutional arrangements. The public service ideology was expressed, for example, in arrangements for Swedish broadcasts to cover the entire nation. Based on detailed analyses of the two cases, Wormbs discusses the rather complex relations between technological solutions and possibilities, institutional conditions, political debates and the intentions to develop broadcast systems based on various cultural political goals, norms and values.

Audience orientation and the communicative ethos of public broadcasting

Audience orientation is as already stated an overall topic in all chapters in this book. However, in Chapters 5 and 6, audience relations are discussed more explicitly. The different and complementary approaches applied in the two chapters clearly illustrate that audience orientation is a multidimensional phenomenon in broadcast communication. Audience orientation refers here

to both the overall communicative ethos of broadcasting (Scannell 1989) and the concrete forms of addressing and involving the audience.

In Chapter 5, Ingegerd Rydin presents a comparative study of children's public service programmes from the 1920s to date. Focusing on a selection of examples from different periods, Rydin analyses the representations of childhood, and the conceptions, ideals and morals of childhood articulated in policy formulations and the programmes, as well as the specific ways of involving the audience. These children's programmes illustrate how broadcasting, from early radio and onwards, were created for 'ordinary' people's everyday life. One key aspect of this was children's participation and performances in the programmes. The best-known children's programme during the pioneer period of Swedish broadcasting radio, *The Children's Letterbox* (Barnens brevlåda), was based partly on children's participation and, as Rydin argues, this made it possible to "reduce the gap between ordinary people and the professionals behind the microphones in the broadcasting houses". However, the communicative ethos of children's programmes has changed over time. Paternalistic voices have been replaced by an orientation to children as active and independent, and the audience address has become more intimate. The analyses show how shifts in the public images of childhood in radio and television are related to contemporary societal trends and ideologies.

In Chapter 6, Michael Forsman analyses what he refers to as different 'technologies of audience making', in relation to Swedish local radio from 1977 to 2000. His concept captures four essential (and related) aspects of audience orientation: *model listener*, *mode of address*, *audiences as producers and participants*, *audience research*. Forsman argues for the importance of understanding the handling of audiences as integrated in both the scheduling and programming *before* the broadcast, the modes of address and forms of participation *during* the broadcast, and the monitoring and ratings *after* the broadcast. Based on these conceptualizations, Forsman presents an empirical study of changes in audience orientation in local public service radio during three periods. These are related to institutional and technological changes such as the increase in media competition and the development in direction to multiplatform environments.

Media professionals: occupational strategies, norms and practices

Broadcasting, its social relationships, cultural forms and public spaces, is the outcome of professional practices. Professional work is organized to produce programmes but reflects, at the same time, different understandings of the overall aims and values of broadcasting, and its relations to audiences as well as other institutions in society.

In Chapter 7, Lars-Åke Engblom analyses the recruitment of staff in Swedish radio and television. The overall topics focused on include how key profes-

sionals and occupational groups were recruited, what methods were used and what competences and merits were sought for. Of particular interest is not just the recruitment in itself, but what this can tell us about the development of the broadcast institutions, and what they have tried to achieve in looking for people with certain qualities, experiences and knowledge. Engblom identifies three important periods with rather specific patterns and methods of recruitment. In the first 'academic period' (up until the 1950s) people were recruited mainly because of their expertise, based on their academic background. The second period (1960s, 70s and 80s), called 'the journalistic period', is characterized by the massive increase of employees mainly recruited for their journalistic and content specific competences. In the third 'competition period' (from the 1990s onwards), there is, for example, an increase in the focus on personalities and their contribution to the profile of the channels, and auditions being more regularly used in the recruitment process.

A key aspect of the discourses and cultural universes created in broadcasting is the representation of different groups and identities. In Chapter 8, Monica Löfgren Nilsson presents a study of gender processes in Swedish Public Service news from the 1950s to the 2000s. The study is based on interviews with a great number of journalists who have experience in different periods, as well as extensive study of news stories. Gender equality has been one of the central missions in the Swedish Public Service. Focusing on different gendering processes inside the newsroom, Löfgren Nilsson can show important changes since 1956. Considerable efforts have been made to achieve gender equality. However, although the position of women in the newsroom has been strengthened and gender typing has decreased over time, news production and the programmes are still characterized by gender bias in the 2000s.

The history of broadcasting is partly a history of changing forms of public political communication. In Chapter 9, Peter Esaiasson and Nicklas Håkansson analyse how the relations between professional journalism and political representatives have developed over time, with a focus on the election broadcasts from 1932 to 2010. Election debates and interviews have a long history in Swedish broadcasting and offer excellent opportunities for longitudinal studies. The authors show how the control over the organization of debates and interviews, as well as the roles and relations in the actual interactions, has changed over time. The transformations in election programmes, and related practices and negotiations, also illustrate how the political system has become increasingly dependent on media logics. The development of a more independent, critical and adversarial form of journalism in the 1960s marked an important shift in public political communication. The authors also discuss how the norms and practices of journalism reflect various understandings of the audience and what type of political communication the audience should benefit from.

The development of broadcast genres

Broadcast histories are often organized in relation to genres (Crisell, 2001; Gomery, 2008). This is reasonable as genres represent types or categories of programme, possible to distinguish and follow over time also in their hybrid forms. More importantly, genres include communicative intentions. The content, cultural forms and communicative styles characterizing a genre are selected and designed for audiences to afford certain audience experiences (cf. Hutchby, 2006; Scanell, 1991). At the same time, genres exist as (and presuppose) codified practices of production (Todorov & Berrong, 1976). In historical studies focusing on communicative aspects of broadcasting, genres are thus important objects of analysis. In the development of genres, we can also trace the influences on broadcasting from other media. In the book there are four chapters that mainly discusses issues related to genre.

In Chapter 10, Bo Reimer presents a study of television in relation to sports. Sport has always been among the most popular genres in television (and radio) both as part of the ordinary schedule and in extraordinary sporting media events. Televised sport includes a number of sub-genres formed as part of other genres such as news and magazines, but what really makes sports in television stand out is the live broadcasting. Television has expanded people's lived experiences of sport and also changed their view of what sport is. The invention of technological practices, narrations, forms of liveness and the staging of sport events have also inspired development in other genres. Reimer identifies a number of different phases of television sport from 1956 to the beginning of the 2000s. During these phases, various communicative resources have been explored to make sport into fascinating, dramatic and popular live events. New technological innovations allow audiences to be offered live experiences that increasingly differ from the experiences of being present. Reimer shows how the genre has developed over time in close relation to specific historical events and settings, as well as in the context of broader technological, cultural, political and economic changes.

From their beginnings in the 1950s, documentaries have had a strong position in Swedish television. The genre has changed significantly over time in terms of aesthetics and narrative, as well as social and political implications. This is analysed by Leif Furhammar in Chapter 11. Television documentaries of this era drew on influences from film (which had great importance for Swedish film production), radio (and the practices of interviewing) and press journalism (and the reporting of current affairs). In the 1960s, the genre developed significantly due to international inspirations, technological innovations, aesthetic and stylistic reorientations and the professionalization and recruitment of filmmakers. Television documentaries received an important role in the public sphere. Referring to a number of examples, Furhammar shows how different voices, positions and ways of addressing the audience have characterized the

genre. This also implies different orientations to the social and political questions focused on. Furhammar observes an important shift in the genre at the end of the 1960s towards more politicized documentaries and argues that the aesthetic qualities and innovations then became subordinated to political and ideological intentions.

What is good entertainment? In Chapter 12, Göran Bolin explores moments in Swedish broadcast history when this question has come under debate. The aim of the chapter is clearly not to answer this question, but to analyse how the entertainment genre has been formed partly in relation to controversies and negotiations of qualities, values and norms. In focusing on concrete examples of what is described as 'moments of disruption', Bolin manages to describe interesting examples and milestones in Swedish broadcast entertainment and at the same time identify some general dynamics of the genre, its historical development and socio-cultural implications. These moments of disruption include audience reactions, media debates and internal fights within the broadcast companies; these relate to societal norms, disputes about quality in cultural production and the ethos of public service versus commercial media.

In Chapter 13, Monika Djerf-Pierre examines how environmental reporting was established in Swedish television news between 1961 and 1973. Environmental news is perceived of as a specific news-genre, and by drawing on historical institutionalism, journalism history and genre theory, the chapter examines how a news genre is born and how it evolves over time. Djerf-Pierre concludes that the institutionalization of 'the environment' in television news reporting was a three-step process. First environmental topics began to appear in the news, then the specific discursive and narrative aspects of the genre evolved and finally it became fully institutionalized as a specialized beat with full-time reporters in the newsroom. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the long-term evolution of environmental journalism and the author argues that environmental reporting for a long time was path-dependent on the discourse and modes of representation that were established already in the first 'formative period' of environmental journalism.

Institutional changes: the example of news and current affairs

The institutional approach to media history, and what is commonly referred to as 'institutional histories', is one of the main strands of research in the field. Interestingly however, a general observation is that the existing institutional histories rarely draw from or relate to institutional theory at all. Instead, they can typically be described as organizational histories, with a distinct emphasis on describing the key events in the development of broadcast organizations. Institutional theory, on the other hand, is by no means a unified tradition but comprises various approaches and theories originating mostly in political science,

sociology and organization studies (Peters, 2005). With regard to journalism and media studies, the institutional approaches vary and ranges from studies departing from Bourdieu's field theory and studies originating in what is commonly referred to as new institutional theory (e.g. Cook, 1998; Sparrow, 1999).

Benson (2006:188) suggests a way of integrating the various approaches to institutions in media research and argues that these approaches all make attempts at "portraying modernity as a process of differentiation into semi-autonomous and increasingly specialized spheres of action" which makes possible the study of the 'mezzo-level' between the individual media organization and the society as a whole. Such a 'mezzo-level' analysis of broadcast media as institutions takes as a point of departure that an institution 1) has achieved a certain degree of autonomy from other institutions, 2) is characterized by a level of internal homogeneity in its 'modus operandi' and 3) this 'modus operandi' involves rules, norms, and routines that become 'institutionalized' and thus taken for granted over time, and that broadcast media institutions 4) exert power over other institutions, making power relations, competition and struggle for positions essential for their formation and evolution. Finally, the institutional approach emphasises the crucial importance of context in triggering social change and conceptualizes historical change in terms of formative periods, critical moments/junctures, and path dependency. A key notion is that the original formation of the modus operandi of an institution will have a lasting influence on how the institution continues to operate. Thus, historical institutionalism in media history opposes theories that postulate linear models of historical change.

Institutional approaches and perspectives are present in several chapters of the book (e.g. chapter 2, 9, 12, 13) but in chapter 14 and 15 the specific focus is on how public service broadcasting was established and evolved in interaction with other societal institutions. In both chapters the specific case for analysis is news and current affairs journalism.

In chapter 14, Monika Djerf-Pierre and Lennart Weibull argues that the development of news and current affairs journalism in Swedish public service broadcasting can be understood as a sequence of periods where each displays a specific institutional logic or modus operandi, embedded in specific ideals and norms. The authors refer to these as 'journalistic regimes' and argue that journalism always exists in a space defined by relations to other societal institutions (in politics, economy, and culture) on the one hand and the audience on the other. They identify four periods, defined by their different approaches to the audience and to other societal institutions, and thus creating four different social roles for journalism: (1) Public educator 1925-1945, (2) Information purveyor 1945-1965, (3) Watchdog & pedagogue 1965-1985 and (4) Interpreting ombudsman 1985-2005. The regime concept captures the essential features of the modus operandi of news and current affairs journalism in different periods. Instead of sharp shifts and break-ups, genres and modes of representations

established during a certain era tend to live on. New genres tend to transform and accommodate old genres.

Chapter 15, on the other hand, focuses the most recent formative period in Swedish broadcast history: the era of deregulation and competition. Anna-Maria Jönsson examines how public service broadcasting acted in face of commercial competition following the years after the deregulation. The chapter discusses the strategies employed by SVT (Sveriges Television) and analyses the extent to which news and current affairs journalism was ‘commercialized’ as a result of the competition in the news market. The conclusion is that there is little evidence for the ‘commercialization’ of PSB journalism in the first 15 years of competition. PSB was certainly influenced by the new commercial competitors, but it was more the other way around in that the news and current affairs in the new commercial channels adapted to the norms and standards recognized by the PBS. This was particularly true for the news in the new terrestrial broadcaster TV4. After a short period at the beginning when TV4 news service, *The news* (Nyheterna), tried to introduce a more ‘popular’ way of selecting and presenting news, they assumed much of the *modus operandi* for doing the news already established by SVT. At the same time there were clear signs of an increased audience orientation, and a stronger focus on branding, in the PSB channels.

Reflection

In a final chapter, Paddy Scannell puts Swedish broadcast in a wider context by discussing general aspects of the historical role of national broadcast services. Basically this is related to how a general public has been created over time in the context of a few central institutions. These institutions, Scannell argues, have had the power to normatively draw “the boundaries of the permissible in political, social and cultural terms for whole societies”, and most importantly, offered daily activities and shared experiences. Scannell’s seminal phenomenological studies have radically deepen our understanding of broadcast communication, and as is shown in this chapter, it offers important perspectives on the historical role of broadcast institutions in connecting long term social life and individuals shareable everyday experience. With concrete examples from chapters in the book Scannell convincingly shows the historical role of broadcast communication in holding “the world in place through time”.

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Innovations:
Technologies for Broadcast Communication

Chapter 2

New Media Between Technology and Content

The introduction of radio and television in Sweden

Lennart Weibull

Introduction

Mysterious. Miraculous. Magic. There are many expressions used when people recall their first experiences of listening to radio or watching television. Regardless of country the new media were met with fascination by the general public. Voices from the radio and images in the television set opened a new world. Many studies have shown how the audience regarded itself as part of a larger, though imagined, community (Barfield 1996; Hilmes 1987; Höijer 1998; Spigel 1992). These feelings have been characterized as a utopian hope, but it is important to add that there were also strong elements of dystopian fear (Spigel 1992).

Reactions to early radio must be seen in the context of the technological innovations of the 1910s and early 1920s that affected people's daily lives (Williams 1999). Newspapers reported on innovations and industrial fairs demonstrated the potential of new technologies. It is typical that the first radio broadcast in Sweden took place at an industrial fair in July 1921. Television broadcasts were technically viable already in the 1930s but, for various reasons, was not introduced until the late 1940s or early 1950s (Winston 1997; cf. Abrahamson 1998). Sweden was a latecomer, having its first official television transmissions in late 1956.

This chapter is an overview of the introduction of radio and television in Sweden. The point of departure is taken from Brian Winston (1997) who points out that there are numerous obstacles from the time when a new technology is transformed from science over performance to social diffusion. The main tension is between on one hand what he calls 'the supervening social necessity' and 'the "law" of suppression of radical potential'. The former refers to what is normally called the invention, e.g. the radio technology *per se*, whereas the latter denote obstacles before the new technology is fit for diffusion, e. g. political and economic decisions. The process of developing a new medium from technology to broadcasting or *publizistik* (cf. Lerg 1965) is normally very long and is influenced by many actors within a wider social sphere.

To be able to understand the process it is important to refine what Winston calls the social sphere. Here I have built on a classical model of how society frames the development of media systems (DeFleur & Ball-Rokeach 1988). According to this model, the main social forces to consider are (a) political factors, e.g. decisions by legislative bodies, regulations and economic support, (b) economic factors, e.g. investments and advertising, and (c) cultural conditions, e.g. national traditions. My interest is especially how actors from the different fields interact during the process, where the conditions of radio and television are shaped (cf. Hilmes 1997). In this process the main actors have to consider the reactions of the audience both as citizens and consumers (DeFleur & Ball-Rokeach 1989).

Given these perspectives this article aims to analyse how radio and television in Sweden was organised originally focusing on its political, economic and cultural conditions. The main question concerns the rationale behind the institutional solutions: Was there a specific Swedish model? And if so, how can it be understood? Further important questions relate to how radio and television constructed their audiences, especially as reflected in the character of the early programming, and, not least, how programme preferences developed among listeners and viewers. To put the Swedish development in a wider context some comparisons with British, American and German radio and television are included.

Radio as a new media technology

As in most other countries radio technology had been in use in Sweden since the 1910s, servicing military and shipping. It was mainly point-to-point radio with the exception of maritime weather reports, but also local radio stations were set up by amateurs mainly to receive and retransmit foreign transmissions, and to send out music. Other and more important actors laid the plans for the new broadcasting service. The first broadcast in 1921 was handled by the Swedish Telegraph Agency (Kungliga Telegrafverket), the government authority with the responsibility for radio technology, and was sponsored by Svenska Radioaktiebolaget (SRA; The Swedish Radio Company), a private company founded by Swedish firms with commercial interests in radio equipment. Following Winston (1997), it was quite clear that radio was regarded as 'an invention open to diffusion', not least because radio in Sweden to a large extent could build on experiences from developments in other countries.

The context of radio introduction

Sweden of the early 1920s was a society in rapid change. The economic problems that had dominated the 1910s seemed to be overcome and people were

beginning to move from the countryside to the expanding industrial towns. In 1920 the social democratic party for the first time formed a government and in the coming year the first election was conducted with universal suffrage, including votes for women. The dominant medium was the press. In 1920 there were 234 newspapers published at least twice a week, an all time high figure. Most newspapers were affiliated to political parties, a tradition that has been characterized as a democratic corporatist media system later influencing also radio and television (Hallin & Mancini 2004).

The decisive point for radio as a mass medium was the move from point-to-point radio telephone to public broadcasting (Lerg 1965; Winston 1998). One main driving factor behind this development was the so called Radio Clubs that the local amateurs had organized. This was an international trend (Briggs 1995; Bruhn Jensen, 1987; Hilmes 1997; Lyytinen 1996). These innovators often had an engineering or a military background. The role of the military was important – the first Swedish broadcast in 1921 was actually produced by a former military radio station (Elgemyr 1996; Wormbs 1997) – in spite of the fact that Sweden as a neutral country in the First World War had less radio experience than, for example, the United States or Germany (Busch 1954; Winston 1998). In 1922 the local radio clubs formed a national association to protect their interests in the development of the medium (Elgemyr 1996). Between 1921 and 1924 many stations started local transmissions, including stations in Göteborg, Linköping, Jönköping and Borås, although they broadcast for just a few hours a week. The radio clubs often received technical equipment from the radio industry as part of its marketing activities, in other cases local newspapers sponsored the stations. The local transmissions often carried commercials.

The start of transmissions also meant that the interest in radio receivers increased. To own a receiver a certain government license was required.¹ In 1923 there were less than 5000 licenses, but at the end of the following year the number was 40 000 (Hadenius 1998). The radio industry welcomed the expansion. The leading group was SRA, as mentioned above, which was formed by Swedish companies in co-operation with the Marconi Company, the main international actor in radio development (cf. Briggs 1997). Also the German company AEG was active in Sweden. The industry had great expectations for the future, and already in 1921 a representative of the Marconi Company told a Swedish newspaper that a radio receiver ‘belongs to the latest acquisitions of family life, next to the gramophone’ (*Nya Dagligt Allebanda*, 15 August 1921).

The Swedish Telegraph Agency was a central actor in the Swedish radio development from the start. Unlike the situation in many other countries at the time, the telegraph agency was not part of the postal administration and it was focused on telegraph and telephone technology (Gustafsson 1987). From 1907 it had a monopoly on radio telegraphy and in 1918 it was granted a monopoly also on public telephone networks (Elgemyr 1996). Its Radio Division closely

followed the international trends in radio as well as keeping close contacts with the industry. In 1922 the Administration started its own experimental transmissions in Stockholm. It placed receivers in strategic locations like the Swedish national news agency Tidningarnas Telegrambyrå (TT) and in the households of some ministers.² The transmissions were carried out in co-operation with SRA, and could be received by anyone possessing a radio set. Other actors were also allowed to produce programs, among them the two main newspapers as well as a piano company and a grocery store. The model seems to have been very similar to the American one where individual companies used the radio for marketing their goods (Winston 1997).

Whereas the three main actors – the radio clubs, the Telegraph Agency and the radio industry – developed their ideas for the future radio, Swedish newspapers devoted much space to the development of radio technology, gave advice how to build a receiver and followed the development of radio from a political and an economic perspective.³ Thus, newspaper readers could follow the competition between the Swedish radio companies as well as be updated on organizational changes in the United Kingdom and in Germany. There were also interviews with important persons, like leading representatives of RCA and Marconi, commenting on the international development of radio by stressing its international importance.

The Swedish model for radio broadcasting

The key role of the Telegraph Agency meant that it handled all applications for radio concessions. In 1922 sixteen applications were received. Among the applicants were private groups representing the radio industry, radio retailers, media like the Bonnier magazine company and some private entrepreneurs (Elgemyr 1996). The application that attracted most interest in public opinion came from a consortium, in which the two radio industry groups, AEG and SRA, participated with the Swedish national news agency TT, owned by Swedish newspaper industry. They wanted to form a new company for radio broadcasting in Sweden focused on entertainment and news (Elgemyr 1996).

The joint application by the two radio companies and TT was somewhat surprising since TT had not been part of any public discussions concerning radio and it was not expected that the two industrial groups would co-operate with each other. However, behind the coalition were a number of negotiations between the radio industry and Radio Division of the Telegraph Agency, on the initiative of the latter. It is not known exactly what was said in these discussions but it seems that the Radio Division wished to have a national radio with a strong industrial base but also to safeguard the quality of the content. TT as a semi-official national agency, owned by the Swedish newspapers, represented a sort of neutral position when it came to content. It is interesting to note that

the model is very similar to what was planned in Germany in 1920, where in the planning for official radio the Post Ministry joined forces with the national news agency (Busch 1956; Lerg 1965), and also in the United Kingdom, where in the same year it was agreed that four British news agencies should be the main news suppliers of the BBC to guarantee quality in the coverage (Briggs 1995; cf. Scannell & Cardiff 1991).

The central role played by TT in the introduction of Swedish radio must be seen in the context of intense controversies concerning news agencies in the 1910s. The traditional Swedish news agency Svenska Telegrambyrå (SvT/The Swedish Telegram Agency), founded in 1867, had started in co-operation with the German news agency Wolff, but had in the 1890s been bought by a private entrepreneur. The SvT was said to favour Stockholm newspapers and to neglect the expanding labour movement. As its reporting during the First World War was regarded as pro-German a competing pro-British agency was established. In this situation of strong mistrust the press organizations decided to found a newspaper-owned independent news agency. In 1921 TT (Tidningarnas Telegrambyrå/The Telegram Agency of the Newspapers) began its operations. TT also had a semi-official character as an agency, including a secret contract with the Foreign Ministry that, in doubtful cases, TT should submit foreign news to the ministry before publishing (Hadenius 1971; Kilander 1981).

In spite of what was expected from its active initiative, the Telegraph Agency in early 1923 decided not to accept any of the applications for radio concessions. The main reason was that the Telegraph Agency itself wanted more control of the distribution technology. This conclusion was based on parallel analyses of the international development. The Administration did not like the US model where a more or less free radio market was developing with almost no government control and becoming a commercial market (cf. Hilmes 1997; Winston 1998). This was not regarded as economically feasible in Sweden, meaning that advertising was excluded as a source of funding. Equally, the British one-company solution, where both technology and programming were granted to one independent radio company (cf. Briggs 1995) was not seen as plausible since it lacked effective state control. Instead, the idea of the Telegraph Agency was that a state monopoly of distribution would make it easier to safeguard the programming principles, not least political neutrality (Hadenius 1998). This was a model not very far from what was decided in Germany at this time (Busch 1956). The Telegraph Agency proposed that only one company could be granted the radio concession. It followed its original idea by stating that this company should consist of representatives from the radio industry, having the technical knowledge, and from the press, represented by the news agency TT, safeguarding unbiased programming. Further, the radio economy should be based on licensing radio sets and not on advertising (Elgemyr 1996).

The policy was generally accepted across the party political groups from left to right. The strongest criticism came from the radio clubs, which saw this framework as the end of independent local stations. They argued that advertising would be a more effective and less bureaucratic financial model for a rapid development of radio. However, the criticism gained little support, the proposal was accepted by the government and in the autumn of 1923 the Telegraph Agency opened for a second round of concession applications.

Given the policy principles, the second round was expected to be an easy victory for the radio industry and TT, but it was not. A new consortium had been organized by the radio industry and other business interests, including a magazine company, but somewhat surprisingly TT was not accepted as a partner. The Telegraph Agency was critical of some requirements put forward by the consortium application and had discussions with TT (Hadenius 1998). In early 1924 a press consortium was formed with TT as representative of the Swedish press and made its own application. The director of TT had mobilized both press organizations and individual newspapers. His main argument was that radio might turn out to be a dangerous competitor, especially if carrying advertising, an argument also used in the British press (Briggs 1995). Thus, it was important for the press to have a stake in this development, and that the press easily could handle the content in co-operation with others, like theatres and orchestras. Another argument was that the press – in contrast to the radio industry and other big business – was part of a generally accepted social interest (Hadenius 1998). The application was politically strong because of the party affiliations of the Swedish newspapers, which meant they were closely linked to all social groups from left to right and this was used as an explicit argument in the debate (Elgemyr 1996; Hadenius, Weibull & Wadbring et al. 2010).

The press consortium formed the company AB Radiotjänst (Broadcasting Service) and was from the beginning regarded as a powerful group, clearly preferred by the Telegraph Agency. However, the Telegraph Agency above all wished to bring the two competing groups together. It meant the start of a negotiation process between on the one hand the Telegraph Agency – later the minister of communication –, and on the other the two consortia, during the autumn of 1924. The negotiations were difficult since the Telegraph Agency could not accept some of the conditions proposed by the industry and business consortium whereas the government wanted a compromise along the original idea (Elgemyr 1996). In the end, it was decided that the radio industry and business interests should be part of the TT application and be offered one third of the shares in AB Radiotjänst and elect two members of the board. Further, the Director of the Telegraph Agency was appointed chairman (Elgemyr 1996; Hadenius 1998). One point was especially important for the press interests – that TT was granted a monopoly on the radio

newscasts (Djerf-Pierre & Weibull 2001). Moreover, the director of TT was also appointed director of Radiotjänst. The new company began its transmissions on 1 January 1925.

The radio organization that came out of the discussions of 1921 and 1924 was in many ways a hybrid. To a large extent it was characterized by state control and it is obvious that the Telegraph Agency directed the process. It also balanced the strong lobbying from the different business interests by actively involving a company owned by newspapers, with their strong political legitimacy making the model acceptable to parliament. Furthermore, the Telegraph Agency kept the control of the radio technology. On the other hand, the radio concession was actually given to a private company, although the chairman was taken from the Telegraph Agency. The outcome was a state-controlled radio handled by a private broadcasting corporation.⁴ The losers in the process were the radio clubs. One main reason for that was the idea that radio was a national undertaking in which the local clubs did not fit.⁵ They were neither part of the negotiations, nor were they asked for advice. It has to be noted that the new radio organization was launched almost without any debate as an administrative process, which seems to have been the case also in other countries (cf. Lerg 1965). The new law was passed unanimously by parliament, fully accepted from left to right, and the final, negotiated, model was decided by the government alone.

The Swedish radio organization was very far from the American commercial model, which was discussed but dismissed. There were similarities with the British process in the important role played by a government agency, leading to the same 'officialness', but the difference is that in Sweden the Telegraph Agency also kept its control over the radio by operating the technology. Thus, Swedish radio was closely linked to government administration, a model similar to that in Denmark and Finland (Bruhn Jensen 1997; Lyttinen 1996), and also to German radio, where the postal administration decided to keep its control over the radio technology (Busch 1956; Lerg 1965).⁶ Although not formally a state radio, the new institution must be understood in the context of a Swedish political tradition where government institutions are generally trusted. The programme company held a monopoly without any political controversy. The similar situation in the other Nordic countries and in Germany⁷ confirms the idea of a northern European 'Democratic Corporatist Media Model' (Hallin & Mancini 2004). It is even reasonable to consider the amalgamation of radio and newspapers in the 1920s as the main root of the model, but reinforced by the idea of radio as a national project: 'enlightening of the countryside' as it was formulated in the policy document from the Telegraph Agency, reflecting the centralization activities to modernize Sweden in the 1920s (Djerf-Pierre & Weibull 2001; cf. Nordberg 1998).

Content and reception of early radio

During the period of concession applications and negotiations on the final organizational model, the radio broadcasting had gradually expanded. The Stockholm station initiated by the Telegraph Agency regularly broadcast opera performances in co-operation with the Royal Opera in Stockholm, popular music with the very popular Swedish singer Ernst Rolf, and Sunday services from the nearby church of St Jakob. In March 1924 the station began to broadcast daily news from the national news agency TT. News had been broadcast before, both by the Stockholm station and by some local stations like Göteborg and Malmö, but now it had a fixed place in the daily programme schedule (Djerf-Pierre & Weibull 2001; Weibull 1997).

When Radiotjänst began broadcasting it was from the existing Telegraph Agency station in Stockholm. The programme profile, including the daily news bulletin from TT, at first was almost the same as that of the former station. Even if there was a formal inauguration on 1 January 1925 the formal change in programme responsibility at first did not mean much for the listeners. The transmissions had no national reach and were dependent on redistribution by local stations. Not until 1927 were all local stations obliged to broadcast the programming of the Stockholm station, which was now called the Swedish national radio, and also could include programmes produced outside Stockholm, Radiotjänst stressed the importance of having *one* national programming and contrasted it to the situation in Britain and Germany (Djerf-Pierre & Weibull 2001).

The programming should, according to the agreement with the government, be of a changing nature and offer good entertainment, as well as being dedicated to maintaining public interest in broadcasting. Further, it was said that programmes should be characterized by a high moral, cultural and artistic level as well as by reliability, objectivity and impartiality. Moreover, the broadcasting should contribute to enlightenment and education (Hört och sett 1974; Nordberg 1998; Nordmark 1999). Organizing radio in two national channels with different content profiles, like in Britain, had been considered but had been turned down as unrealistic, but also because it was not in line with the idea of a national radio.

Given these objectives Radiotjänst developed on the one hand a cultural programming with live classical concerts, theatre, opera performances and dance music, and on the other hand lectures and language courses. Other important parts of the programming were the daily weather report, transmitted at 30 minutes past noon, the news bulletin from TT at 9.15 pm and the Sunday service, morning and evening (Larsson 1988). Already in its first year Radiotjänst also reported live from important events of national character like the classic Swedish ski race *Vasaloppet* and the departure of the Swedish passenger liner *Gripsholm* on her maiden voyage to New York. At the end of the year the programme director of Radiotjänst in a newspaper interview character-

ized 1925 as a year of content experiments, but added that the programming now had a higher quality and was more pluralistic. He especially stressed that Radiotjänst offered programmes suitable for what the company regarded as the needs of 'intelligent' Swedish listeners and was no copy of British or German radio (*Dagens Nyheter*, 19 December 1925).

The programme profile was criticized by the national association of radio clubs for its highbrow character which did not reflect the preferences of people in the countryside (*Dagens Nyheter*, 19 April 1925). Further, the radio clubs stressed the need for advertising to finance local programming. The criticism was in one sense correct, since the national programmes had obviously a high culture profile and there was less emphasis on popular culture (cf. Gans 1999) – but this programming policy represented the main idea of the national radio, reflecting the national culture, similar to the BBC (Crisell 1996). The programming of Radiotjänst also followed this high cultur profile during the years to come (Nordmark 1999). Some new content formats were introduced, e.g. regular reports, called chronicles, from debates in Parliament and on foreign affairs launched in 1927. The programme time increased from 1641 hours in 1925 to almost 3000 in 1930 (Hört och sett 1974). In the early 1930s the distribution was 40 per cent music, 16 per cent lectures and 12 per cent news and weather (Djerf-Pierre & Weibull 2001).

During these years the audience increased dramatically. Already by the end of 1925 there were more than 125,000 licenses, but in 1930 the number was already close to 500,000. Considering that licenses were based on household it is reasonable to believe that the number of listeners was three to four times higher. However, it has be noticed that both radio sets and a radio license were expensive and there were notable socio-economic gaps in radio access. Statistics from 1926 reveal that the average number of licenses per 1000 inhabitants in Sweden was 24.8 – in comparison with 35 in England and 18 in Germany – but varied from 96 in a wealthy suburb north of Stockholm to often less than 10 in the countryside (*Nya Dagligt Allebanda*, 11 November 1925; *Svenska Dagbladet*, 13 February 1926).

A look into the 1925 and 1926 audience correspondence of Radiotjänst shows a grateful radio public.⁸ Especially the language course was much appreciated, but also the music programming – the live broadcasts as well as the Sunday services are mentioned in the letters of appreciation. Of course, these letters represented only a tiny group of listeners. They often reflect an upper middle-class perspective and a value base well in line with the high culture profile of the programming. There were some cultural controversies related to drama programmes. In the correspondence there is criticism concerning programmes which are regarded as unsuitable for young people. Radiotjänst answers that the aim of the programming is pluralism and not that all programmes should be listened to by everyone: it was up to the family to decide for the young persons.

The issue of taste, as also reflected in the audience reactions to early radio in other countries (Bruhn Jensen 1996; Hilmes 1997; Lerg 1965), referred especially to music programmes. Letters from the countryside indicate criticism of the classical music and express interest in more folk and accordion music. The different views on the music content were later reflected in the first radio audience survey in Sweden, conducted in 1929. In this survey, folk music, old-time dance music and accordion music were at the top of the listeners' preferences, and symphony orchestra music, opera and dance music, including jazz music, were at the bottom. The survey results, which contrasted dramatically with the programming policy, created uneasiness in the Radiotjänst leadership. The internal conclusion was that, even if the study had shown some interesting results, this type of material was not relevant for the programming profile (Djerf-Pierre & Weibull 2001).

Although there were some controversies it seems that Radiotjänst developed a reasonable balance between its goal to enlighten and educate the audience and adaption to audience preferences. But it is important to stress that the programming to a large extent reflected the official Sweden, broadcast by a national company under government control. The voices on the radio were official – they should be like the voices of actors with a minimum of dialects (*Röster i Radio* nr 1, 1934) – and all programmes, including interviews, were normally based on prepared scripts. In the early days of radio, only one programme diverged from this – the children's program *Barnens brevlåda* (*The Children's Letterbox*), a weekly programme launched in 1925, where ordinary children participated (see chapter 5). This programme was very popular (Höjjer 1996), perhaps because of its informality.

To a large extent the technology itself, rapidly developing during the first decade of radio, also contributed to the fascination in listening. The introduction of radio was to a large extent a matter of introducing a new technology in the home. In the newspapers, especially in the upper-class paper *Svenska Dagbladet*, there was a focus on the equipment, including informative articles on how to build your own crystal receiver. Early radio memories often refer to such homebuilt radio sets, not least the sense of magic when voices or music could be heard. Often people from many households gathered to listen to one set. The technology seems have made the radio a matter for men, whereas women were a little more reluctant (Höjjer 1998). Gradually, however, the radio set was given a modern design, reinforcing its central position in the household.

Listeners in Sweden as in other countries were fascinated by the new medium. The news bulletins and the weather reports were very attractive as well as direct broadcasts, including sports and popular music. The radio opened a window to a world unknown to many listeners (McLuhan 1999; cf. Lerg 1965; Scannell 1989).⁹ Here the radio by its content came to define what was of national interest. Thus, even if the attraction of the high quality opera and theatre

performances, programmes on literature, and academic lectures on different subjects, of course, differed between groups, it was generally accepted as Swedish national radio. The serious profile probably contributed to the strong long-term trust in Swedish national radio (Weibull 2011).

Compared with other countries, the serious content character is very similar to that of the other Nordic countries and different from the market-driven American music box (Hilmes 1997). That is probably one of the reasons why the Swedish gramophone industry, unlike the situation in the United States (Winston 1998), did not suffer from the development of radio. Actually record sales instead increased from 0.3 to 3 million between 1925 and 1929 (Gronow 1983; Gronow & Englund 2007). Neither did radio have any visible effects on the press. It is true that the number of newspapers stagnated in the 1920s and 1930s, but that was more an effect of the Swedish economic situation than of the radio. Radio was regarded as another type of medium. Since its news bulletin was placed very late in the daily programme it could hardly replace a newspaper and the increasing interest in news in the 1930s favoured both newspapers and radio.

Television as a new media technology

The reporting on new technological developments in the 1920s did not concern only radio. Also experiments with what was later going to be television were presented, often in great detail. It was often seen as a further development of radio, but also of cinema.¹⁰ The potential of the new technology was that images could be distributed in the same way as radio. As we know regular television broadcasting was technically viable in the 1930s in America, Britain and Germany, but for various reasons it was 'suppressed' until the late 1940s, not least because of the Second World War but also from controversies on international standards (Winston 1998). In Sweden too there had been television experiments in 1938, sponsored by the radio industry, but they were stopped because of the war. In the second half of the 1940s regular television transmissions developed in the United States and the United Kingdom (Boddy 1998; Crisell 1997) and in Germany in the early 1950s (Dussel 1999; Elsner, Müller & Spangenberg 1993). Whereas most European countries introduced television in the first half of the 1950s, television in the Nordic countries started first in the mid-1950s or later, Sweden in 1956.

The context of the new television

Sweden of the 1950s was characterized by rapid economic growth. The country had not been part of the Second World War and its industry could expand when

borders opened. The social democratic party was in power from 1945, between 1951 and 1957 in coalition with the Farmers' Party. It was an expansive media period with increasing newspaper circulation, especially for the new tabloid papers, whereas many small papers had to close. Radio had developed during the war but in spite of many discussions there was still only one channel. Television was discussed but met with little enthusiasm among political decision makers, who wanted to look at experiences from other countries before deciding on a Swedish model. For many politicians radio had priority and a second radio channel was regarded as more important than the introduction of television (Hadenius 1998; c. f. Syvertsen & Skogerbø 1998).

As in the introduction of radio, the Telegraph Agency was an important player in its role as responsible for transmission technology. In 1947 a committee for television research had been initiated by the Telegraph Agency in co-operation with the Royal School of Technology (KTH) and the industry, e.g. L. M. Ericsson and the Swedish Philips. The committee studied the development of television in America and carried out local experimental transmissions from a studio at KTH. At the beginning Radiotjänst was not a member of the committee but it was later invited to participate. That Radiotjänst had not been involved from the start indicated a conflict with the Telegraph Agency around the technology. The problem was how to draw – and to agree on – the borderline between the technology for transmission and the production technology especially since Radiotjänst had increased its technical competence (Elgemyr 1996). The Telegraph Agency, however, did not want to extend the role of Radiotjänst since it threatened its monopoly of radio technology, a situation leading to recurrent debates.¹¹

The controversy between Radiotjänst and the Telegraph Agency affected the introduction of television. The Administration focused on its institutional interest in the new technology and was open to different solutions concerning the organization of the programme company as well as financing television with advertising. On the other hand Radiotjänst was interested in being responsible also for television, including an increased part of the technical responsibility for production. The political discussions on television went on for rather a long time, mainly because of problems of financing the large investments needed for the transmitting stations to cover all of Sweden. The Telegraph Agency and the radio industry were somewhat uneasy, but the industry could wait because there still was a strong market for radio sets (Hadenius 1998).

In many countries where the radio organization was politically regulated, the public companies normally developed television within its own organisation, for example the BBC or the German NWDR (Crisell 1997; Dussel 1999), and thus putting pressure on the politicians. In Sweden, however, it originally seemed that the organization of television was an open question, not least because of the activities of the Telegraph Agency, but the first main issue at

stake was not the organization, but the way of financing television, in practice the role of advertising.

That advertising issue was one reason why other groups now formed their positions on television. The Association of Swedish Newspaper Publishers (TU) had its own television committee. The main fear of the press was that television should carry advertising and therefore be a serious threat to the newspaper industry. Its idea was that television should be owned by the newspaper industry. The TU produced a document with arguments against television advertising and sent it to the minister of communications and other concerned politicians. Not very surprisingly, the opposite position was taken by the Swedish Association of Advertisers. It argued strongly in favour of television as a new advertising channel which should be introduced as soon as possible (Hadenius 1998).

The political decision process

In the early 1950s the field had been laid out and the important players were all present. The political process, however, was slow because of little interest among the politicians and the economic problems. One important argument was that television was a large investment for a country like Sweden and that therefore all main problems for the near future had to be solved before starting. Some politicians were unsure whether the public was prepared to pay for both a new television set and an increased licence fee. There were also arguments that television was an 'American', superficial medium not suitable for Sweden, where quality radio had a very strong audience appreciation (Hadenius 1998; cf. Spigel 1999).

The debates took place mainly in a government commission on television that had been initiated already in 1951. Its members were mainly experts on television technology, but the chairman was a politician and among its members were representatives of the Telegraph Agency, Radiotjänst and the industry. The aim of the commission was to propose a model for Swedish television. However, the findings of the commission were generally bleak. A first proposal was to start experimental television transmissions where Radiotjänst should produce the programmes and the Telegraph Agency should provide the technical facilities. The financing should be a combination of licence fees and advertising. The proposal was strongly criticized in the press and it was turned down by the government. The reason was mainly that the model indicated that television would be dependent on advertising (Hadenius 1998).

The slow political process opened the way for other actors. In 1953 a consortium of the television industry in co-operation with some trade organizations applied for a four-year concession on television financed by advertising. The application was handled by the same government commission, where a majority, backed by the press representatives, objected because the proposal

was based on advertising. The consortium now changed its strategy and started an intense promotion campaign to gain public support for the introduction of television, in which the Telegraph Agency also took part. One of the main arguments was that a further delay meant that Sweden gradually was losing ground in television development. The argument became especially obvious when Denmark started its official television transmissions in early 1954 and these transmissions could be received in a large part of southern Sweden.¹² A cinema company was now granted a concession for one week's television transmissions to be broadcast to radio retailers to be shown in the shop windows. This week was regarded a success since it increased the interest in television, including advertising, among the general public.

While the activities promoting a rapid introduction of television financed by advertising went on, those who opposed advertising gradually organized. Radiotjänst and the Association of Swedish Newspaper Employers began actively lobbying among politicians for a non-advertising model. Contacts were established with the government and in 1954 Radiotjänst was granted a concession for experimental transmissions in co-operation with the Royal School of Technology. For Radiotjänst this was a very important step. Its radio programming was popular and it was backed by most of the Swedish press. Now it was important for the company to show the general public that it had competence to handle television also. These transmissions meant that Radiotjänst finally appeared as a strong actor pressing the government commission to present its proposal on the television organization.

The final proposal from the radio commission, presented in late 1954, was close to the ideas of Radiotjänst and the Swedish newspapers. Television should, like radio, serve 'society, culture, public education and homes'. One important argument was the well documented objectivity and neutrality of Radiotjänst news coverage. Further, the commission proposed that advertising should not be permitted since it could harm the integrity of television, especially in a monopoly situation. The model proposed implied that the radio monopoly of Radiotjänst would be transformed into a radio and television monopoly. However, the model also foresaw a change in the structure of the company. Even if the newspapers would still have a majority in the company, now a number of important social organizations, like trade unions, churches and educational associations, should be invited to apply for shares to guarantee close ties to social movements.

The debate that followed was characterized by the expected reactions. The industry and many trade organizations criticized the proposal and argued in favour of advertising – the Telegraph Agency also supported such a position, whereas Radiotjänst and the newspaper association as well as the organizations close to the labour movement, associations of education and enlightenment and churches, backed the proposal of the commission. The 1956 proposal from

the government – a coalition between the Social Democratic party and the Farmers' party – to parliament in principle followed what the commission had proposed. It was criticized by representatives of the liberal and conservative parties, but was decided by a substantial majority. The government later decided upon a broader ownership solution, reducing the shares of newspapers to 40 per cent and offering 40 per cent for other organizations and 20 per cent for the industry (Hadenius 1998). At the same time the name of the company was changed from Radiotjänst to Sveriges Radio (Sweden's Radio).

The decision on television may seem just a continuation of the hybrid model established in 1924. Radiotjänst had swallowed television and now was granted a monopoly on both radio and television within the same framework as before. Looking more closely into the new model, it is obvious that there were significant policy changes. The most important one was that the private company Radiotjänst was partly turned into a public company, where the main social organizations now owned a substantial share. The change of name to *Sweden's Radio* is a symbol of this. There are at least two reasons for the changes. The first is that Radiotjänst had developed gradually in this direction. Its semi-official character, manifest particularly during the Second World War, had grown stronger, and the newspapers as an owner group played a secondary role. Probably developments in the newspaper industry made them less attractive as owners than before. The second reason was the intense debate on advertising before the introduction of television. The government, an alliance between the social democratic party and the farmers' party, reflecting its ideological position, wanted to demonstrate that radio and television were public and not private services. The newspapers backed the standpoint – perhaps less motivated by ideology than by self-interest. The model, based in the democratic corporatist tradition (Hallin & Mancini 2004), was finally confirmed with the decision on the second television channel in 1969. After a debate on the same lines as in the mid-1950s, including references to new British ITV model (Crisell 1996), it was decided to dismiss advertising as a source of funding for television and organize the second television channel as another part of Sveriges Radio.¹³ The principle formulated was that non-commercial radio and television was a public service – a guarantee for independent radio and television (Hadenius 1998).

Content and reception of television

The start of Radiotjänst's experimental television transmissions in the autumn of 1954 was also the start of its television production school. These so-called exercise programmes went on for a year, but the frequency of transmissions was low with only one or two days a week scheduled, mainly on Fridays. Also programmes produced or sponsored by the radio industry were broadcast. The

Radiotjänst journal presented the programme schedule for television once a week and printed a number of articles on television productions. Already in a very early phase of television planning Radiotjänst underlined the importance of news, and decided on the newsreel model as part of the weekly broadcasts. The content of newscasts was mainly cultural or scientific events as well as accidents and catastrophes (Djerf-Pierre and Weibull 2001). In 1955 it was replaced by *TV-journalen*, a more professional news production.

The exercise programmes could be seen in Stockholm, although the technical quality varied. When Radiotjänst started its regular television broadcasting in the autumn of 1956 it was only the Stockholm region that was able to receive its transmissions, with a population of approximately 1.2 million persons. Therefore Sveriges Radio had two main priorities: first, the distribution network should be expanded as soon as possible; and second, to produce daily broadcasts (Hahr 1956). The first priority had to be negotiated with the Telegraph Agency and the other was a matter for the company itself. However, it was not until the 1958 the television distribution network covered the main cities in Sweden and in 1961 there was still one weekday without television. The programming gradually expanded. Swedish cultural programmes, including specially produced television dramas, in the tradition of early radio, Swedish entertainment shows with formats taken from radio, and American programmes like *The Lucy Show* or *Perry Mason* dominated the first years (Gradvall 1996). Also some new formats like the very popular *Hemma* (At Home) about cooking and housework, *Tekniskt magasin* (Technology Magazine) and the children's programmes, e.g. *Humle and Dumle*, were launched. However, by far the biggest success was *Kvitt eller dubbelt*, a Swedish copy of the *\$64,000 Question* (Höijer 1998; cf. Paterson 1998). The *TV-journalen* was expanded and broadcast twice a week until September 1958, when it was replaced by a more modern news magazine, *Aktuellt*, originally broadcast three times a week. There was a gradual increase in the programme volume: from 950 hours per year in 1958/59 to 2120 hours in 1964/65.

The reception of television among the general public is coloured by the gradual introduction. An article in the Radiotjänst journal at the end of 1956 presented how a Stockholm family had changed their daily habits because of the introduction of television. The family had bought a television set already in connection with the exercise broadcasts. The adult family members watched almost all programmes but are most interested in the newscast *TV-journalen*. Radio had lost its attraction at night but was listened to in the daytime (*Röster i Radio* no. 52, 1956). However, this Stockholm family was hardly representative of an average Swedish family in the mid-1950s. Most Swedes had no access to television and the first households to buy a television set were of higher socio-economic status and higher income¹⁴; the tendency was strengthened by the fact that television distribution was initially in urban areas (Höijer 1998).

However, certain events affected the acquisition of television sets. The Ice Hockey World Championships and the Football World Championship, both in 1958, increased the number of television households. But also pressure from children was an important factor (Höijer 1998). In 1957 there were less than 25,000 television licences, in 1960 it had already reached almost 800,000 and in 1965 the number was about two million (Hört och sett 1974; Hujanen & Weibull 2010). It is reasonable to say that it took about a decade for television to be domesticized.

People without television sets visited friends or relatives to watch theirs. Children especially regularly met in the homes of those who had a television set, often middle-class homes with children (Höijer 1998). Some groups were critical of television for different reasons, for example, because of their religious beliefs, but such criticism does not seem to have been of any great importance. It has also been said that academics generally were reluctant to embrace television but Swedish data do not confirm such a hypothesis (Lindblad 1970). The only group that was a little more negative to television were the elderly, possibly for economic reasons but also because they were used to radio and uneasy with the new technology.

It is true that the early television was met with fascination, but not to the same extent as the early radio. The introduction of radio had been part of a technological revolution, whereas television developed in a situation when the average household was used to a lot of new equipment. Furthermore, Sweden introduced television relatively late and many Swedes had already watched television abroad, even receiving Danish television in the south of Sweden. In many respects television was an extension of radio and the radio set in the living room was simply replaced by the television set (cf. Briggs 1999). However, for children the new medium of television, bringing pictures into the home, was regarded as miraculous, and even the test picture seemed to be attractive (Höijer 1998). Within the household it seems that women were especially interested in television, contrasting the introduction of radio, where men were the most active (Höijer 1998).

Another tendency, also recorded in an early survey, was that most of the viewers watched most of the programmes (Unsgaard & Ivre 1962). Watching television on a Saturday night was like going the cinema – almost 60 per cent watched all the programmes (Sjödén 1967). The survey showed that this behaviour was more frequent in working-class families than among people with university education. As has been pointed out in many studies (e.g. Briggs 1999), the importance of television was often visible in the design of the room where television was watched. The television set was often placed in a central position making it possible to sit on the sofa and watch television. The attraction of television continued to be high in spite of the many technical problems during the first years.

The high attraction of television was also met with criticisms pointing out the danger of television. The most common of these was that television would make the Swedes passive. Instead of participating in organizations, going to meetings or being active in society they would sit at home only watching the 'dumburken', a derogatory name for the television set. Children would not have time for their homework, it was argued. Swedes would be Americanized and the traditional Swedish culture would be lost. When television viewing gradually matured, this debate disappeared (Graf 1997; cf. Ulvenstam 1967).

The expansion of television gradually changed radio listening. On an average Saturday evening in 1958 about 60 per cent of the Swedes listened to the radio news and almost 50 per cent to the entertainment programme that followed. Five years later the percentages were down to 10 to 20 per cent (Djerf-Pierre & Weibull 2001). Television had taken over at night. On the other hand, radio listening had increased in the early afternoon and radio made its morning programmes more attractive.

The reactions to television from the newspapers were cautious. Programme listings were published and the programmes often reviewed (Hujanen & Weibull 2010). There was an obvious uncertainty how to treat the medium: Would a positive treatment mean that the newspapers lost readers to television? This was typical for the subscribed morning papers whereas the tabloid papers instead began to exploit television reporting. This was probably an important reason for the rapid increase in Swedish tabloid circulation between 1956 and 1971 and the reason why there was no market for a specialized radio and television magazine in Sweden (Weibull 1996). The losing medium in Sweden, as in most other countries, was the cinema. Between 1956 and 1963 the number of cinema attendances declined from 80 million per annum to 40 million.

Conclusions

In this article the aim has been to give an overview of the introduction of radio and television in Sweden. Two questions have been put: (1) how was the new medium organized and why? and (2) how was the new medium received by the general public and what did it mean? This concluding discussion focuses on differences and similarities between the two introductory phases.

There was almost exactly three decades between the introduction of radio and the introduction of television. It might seem a short time, but the 1920s and the 1950s in most respects represent two very different societies. In the 1920s radio transmissions were a totally new phenomenon, whereas in 1950s the television could be regarded as just a new type of receiver. Put in another way, the introduction of radio in the 1920s was part of an expansion of new technology, often characterized by utopian hope, but also with some fear of the

consequences (Spigel 1992, 1999). Television, on the other hand, was part of the development, and even an indicator, of the welfare state of the 1950s with little discussion of the potentials or risks of the technology but more interest in programmes and its contribution to the quality of life. It is important to recall the fact that this was not unique for Sweden. In both cases the invention was already there and the issue was how to organize it (Winston 1998).

When making a distinction between the technology-based introduction of radio in the 1920s and the mainly programme-based introduction of television in the 1950s it is easier to understand both the organization models chosen and the reception among the general public. The importance of technology in the 1920s made it very natural for the Telegraph Agency to take the lead. It also meant that the dystopian fears that might have been related to the new technology were balanced by the control of a government agency, which was accepted as in line with the political tradition (Hallin & Mancini 2004). Like in many other countries news and cultural programming was of great importance of the new medium (cf. Scannell & Cardiff 1991). It is reasonable to interpret the government decision of 1924 that the Telegraph Agency would be a guarantee for programme quality. In the 1950s the role of the Telegraph Agency was less active. Its control was regarded as warranted by its responsibility for radio and in a way the old model was inherited with only minor changes.

That the press had an early interest in radio is well known from many countries, including starting local radio stations or trying to control radio news bulletins (Crisell 1996; Hilmes 1997). However, the Swedish model with the newspaper industry, through its news agency, as the owner of the radio company is unique, even if there are some similarities with the German model (Lerg 1965). The Telegraph Agency wanted to establish an organizational model that was acceptable for the government and guaranteed programme quality in line with national interests. It seems that the newspapers themselves did not initiate the idea of a newspaper-owned radio but the Telegraph Agency advocated this model, probably because it regarded the newspapers with their close links to politics as politically trustworthy. Even though the director of the radio company argued that it was important for the newspapers to have control of the new medium, the papers seem to have been rather passive but accepted the idea. When the introduction of television was under debate the situation was different. The current issue was not television as technology but as content. A television service with advertising was regarded as a serious threat to the newspaper industry. Now the press organizations themselves lobbied strongly for a non-commercial television.

We can also observe the same pattern in the reception of the new media. The newspaper coverage in the early days of radio was much focused on the technology, whereas in the debate on television it concerned the programming (cf. Hujanen & Weibull 2010). The simple explanation, of course, is that

in the 1920s there was very little experience of what could be the content of radio; at first radio content was defined by radio itself but based on an oral tradition, a “second orality” (Ong 1999) with lectures and discussions, or on existing technical models as for music. Lectures and music were in line with radio as primarily an educator with room for leisure (Nordberg 1998), but over the years it developed a programme-based profile and in the 1950s it was very natural also to view television as a source of programmes. The lobby for commercial television also used programmes as examples to create an interest in the new medium.

In the reactions of the general public to the new radio technology is in focus. The magic was connected to getting the equipment to function. The ‘radio set’ of the 1920s also looked ‘technical’ because it was not yet covered by any design. Gradually radio sets were given a design as well as becoming larger. When television was introduced, from the outset all the technology was hidden within a modern design and the set was more like a piece of furniture (Höijer 1998; Spigel 1999). It is reasonable to believe that at least part of the gender difference observed by Höijer (1998) is related to the different characters of the media. The radio technology of the 1920s was closer to a male sphere of interest with its focus on the new technical equipment, whereas the new television in the 1950s was closer to a female interest in the home. However, it must not be forgotten that social changes also played an important role: the voices of men dominated the radio of the 1920s, whereas in the postwar era there were more opportunities for women in the media, even though still very few (Engblom 1996; cf. Hilmes 1997).

The fascination of television does not seem to have been as great as it was for radio; television was not a totally surprising invention but more the ‘radio of the welfare state’, bring new quality of life. In comparison with early radio, where music, news and lectures were the dominant content, television offered more light entertainment, although the tradition from radio also meant that quality fiction had a given place. Another important difference is that radio represented a national and almost an official space, filled with official people. On one hand radio contributed to the creation of Sweden, on the other it reproduced the social hierarchy. When television was introduced it placed Sweden in the post-war world by opening a new window with imported programmes. Furthermore, it was a democratic medium increasingly filled with ordinary people, in pictures.

It is important not to look at these differences only in terms of media technology, but also in a perspective of social change. As has been stressed, Swedish society of the early 1920s was still in a very early stage of modernization. More than 70 per cent of the population lived in the countryside, political democracy had only recently been established and the economy was just recovering after the problems during the First World War period. It can be contrasted with the

developing welfare state in the mid-1950s, where 45 per cent of the population lived in towns and industry as booming. In the 1920s centralized radio was an important means in this modernization process. The stated aim of the national programmes was to enlighten and educate by high quality programming in contrast to the low quality of local stations. In the 1950s television was a further development of the radio technology offering a higher quality to daily life. In a way the television set and what could be seen in it was regarded as part of increasing social welfare.

Notes

1. In 1923 the licence system was taken over by the National Telegraph Agency and somewhat simplified (Elgemyr 1996).
2. It can be noted that the same model for political marketing of radio was used in Germany in 1923 (Lerg 1965).
3. This is based on an analysis of the extensive collection of press clippings on technology and radio in the central archive of Swedish Radio and Swedish Television, Stockholm.
4. In 1930 a group of politicians proposed that the programme company should be taken over by the state. One reason was that the newspapers were using it for their own interests restricting the news to the evening. The proposal was rejected by the Telegraph Agency but supported by the radio clubs. In the end the proposal was rejected by parliament, though by a narrow margin (Hadenius 1998). One consequence, however, was that Radiotjänst was forced to broadcast an additional news bulletin at noon.
5. In the following years there were a number of clashes between Radiotjänst and local radio programming being allowed to send local programmes during the first years of radio. Radiotjänst was critical of these because they did not adapt to the national quality norms.
6. In 1924 the ministry had even negotiated with the newspapers to create a programme company. Also in the end (1923) one of the two programme companies *DRADAG*, originally *Buch und Presse*, received the monopoly on news and current affairs. It was partly owned by the national news agency TT and a number of newspapers, but the majority was in public hands, controlled by the Ministry of the Interior (Busch 1956; Lerg 1965).
7. It must be noted that the German control model was motivated by state security concerns to a larger extent because of the current political situation in Germany (Lerg 1965; cf. Noelle-Neumann, Schulz & Wilke 2002).
8. Material from the central archive of Sveriges Radio and Sveriges Television: *Radiotjänst. Korrespondens Centrala kansliet 1925 /E2A:1* (Correspondence. General Manager's office 1925).
9. Letters to Radiotjänst indicate that, in the early days of radio, the formal signal of the exact time at noon was regarded as especially important (cf. Lerg 1965).
10. From the newspaper clippings in the archive of Swedish Radio and Swedish Television (also note 3).
11. The conflict was not solved until 1953, when the government decided that all technical facilities needed for programme *production* were the responsibility of Radiotjänst (Elgemyr 1996).
12. Danish television could be received in the southern part of Sweden. Its popularity was strengthened by the fact that it offered a weekly journal on events in southern Sweden, produced by Radiotjänst in Malmö (Djerf-Pierre & Weibull 2001).
13. It can be noted that Hallin and Mancini (2004) refer to the media system of Great Britain as a 'liberal model', which denotes that it is more market oriented.
14. In Sweden television sets normally are bought, not rented as for example in Great Britain.

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Chapter 3

Inventiveness and a Desire to Experiment

The development of production technology in Swedish Radio 1925-1955

Göran Elgemyr

“In our time all forms of technology are racing ahead at breakneck speed, and radio technology is the one most eager to be first across every finishing line.”

(5th Yearbook 1929)

Introduction: Radio – A miraculous medium

“But where are the technicians?” I want to shout as I read newspaper articles from the 1930s about the new technical devices at the broadcasting corporation Radiotjänst (1924-1957) that the newspapers have been informed about. The articles I have read usually describe in great detail how the equipment is constructed and how it works. Yet they do not contain a single interview with the technicians who worked with the equipment on a daily basis. Two people are always at the centre of attention: radio’s first announcer and reporter, Sven Jerring, who symbolized Swedish radio until the 1970s; and Head of Technology Erik Mattsson, who also was involved from the start, on secondment from Telegrafverket (The Telegraph Agency). But not even they have anything concrete to say about the role of technicians in creating programmes. The technicians are equally absent from various experimental reports; the articles mostly describe developments in the field of technology, even though it must have been apparent how much exhausting effort that lay behind them as well as the precision required to work with the various devices.

The situation is no better in the books released by the broadcasting corporation to celebrate anniversary years. The 5th Yearbook focuses on the technological miracle, and the 25th Yearbook mostly deals with acoustics. The 40th Yearbook includes technology in the periphery, but in the book published on the 50th anniversary of Swedish Radio, technology has been completely forgotten. Unfortunately, few people working with programming have written their memoirs. And even in those few books that exist, the technical work is

conspicuous by its near-total absence; it is as if the technicians did not exist. The reason why I began in the 1980s to write about production technology, when I actually meant to continue dealing with freedom of expression in radio, was that I wished to examine the great influence of the Telegraph Board (*Telegrafstyrelsen*) on Radiotjänst, as the company was called until 1957, when it changed its name to Sveriges Radio (Swedish Radio). Because I was working with programming operations it was natural for me also to emphasize the technical innovations within production technology up to the 1950s, which were then successively improved and expanded in the following decades until the digitalization of the 1990s changed the programming work. I wanted to examine why the relationships between technology and programme production were so vital to the development of radio as a communications medium. In doing so, I found myself on completely unexplored ground. Listening again to the interviews I conducted with technicians active since the 1930s, I am struck by how they mostly talk about how the technical equipment was invented and how it worked, and not so much about the daily work in the studio or the field or about relations with the programme staff. Perhaps this is not so surprising; every improvement within technology made the technical quality better, and their work not only was made easier thereby but also felt more meaningful.

This chapter is primarily concerned with how production technology developed from the most minimal conceivable level at the outset to the situation in the 1950s. What were the major innovations, and how were they put into regular use? What did they make it possible to do? What did they mean for radio's distinctive character and for listeners? What was the interaction like between the technicians and programme staff? Two occupational groups were working side-by-side within production technology, technicians from Telegrafverket on the one hand, and the broadcasting corporation's own recording technicians on the other; what was their relationship to each other? What were the consequences of the technology having two masters?

This chapter is not only based on interviews; above all it builds on a thorough survey of Sveriges Radio's document archives and the national telephone company Telia's corporate archives. One obstacle within media history is that the archives are filled with information when it comes to decision-making organs, but are much leaner with regard to programme creation. It has therefore been extremely difficult to find the answers in the relevant archives. The technical work was an ongoing process, and it is not always easy to find dates for the different phases or exactly when equipment important for progress was invented or changed, or how it created new conditions for programming activities. A few years after the publication of my book *Radion i strama tyglar* (Radio under tight reigns), which among other things dealt with production technology, Carin Åberg took up the same subject, but in a longer time-frame

and dealing with television as well. She also mentions the obstacle of not always finding relevant materials (Åberg 1997:19). International research also appears to have taken little interest in production technology. The pioneering Norwegian scholar of radio, Hans Fredrik Dahl, touches in passing on technology, but that was as part of an agreement with Norwegian radio, who wanted to publish a popular-scientific account, which came out in 1999: *Kringkastningens tekniske historie* (The technical history of broadcasting). In Denmark, *Statsradiofoniens teknik* (The technology of State radio) was published in 1984. Thanks to these books I have been able to make certain comparisons. Unfortunately, the Swedish summary, *Rundradion 1926-1996* (Broadcast Radio 1926-1996), published by Finnish broadcasting corporation Yle, lacks any exhaustive account of their production technology.

The founding of Radiotjänst in 1924

Most people associate the name Marconi with radio but it is more than just a trademark. Guglielmo Marconi is one of the most central figures within the rise of radio. In the late 19th century he conducted successful experiments with wireless telegraphy, but that was from one fixed point to another. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1909. Another milestone was the invention of the electron tube. The military backed the further development of wireless electronic communications systems. Russian-American David Sarnoff is another name to remember. He was an electrical engineer at Marconi's Wireless Telegraph Company, and during the First World War he presented a vision of how one could use radio waves to reach an enormous audience. Transmitting music had already been shown to be possible, Sarnoff pointed out, and this could be supplemented with "news items, lectures and scores" (Briggs & Burke 2002:160). In 1919 he became the head of the Radio Corporation of America. The breakthrough for the concept of "broadcasting" came when an American radio station in Pittsburgh transmitted partial results in the ongoing presidential election. This was the start of a chaotic wave of establishment of new radio stations in the USA. Within a few years these were 564 in number. Europe learned from this, and the creation of British radio was done in an exemplary way, according to the principle that radio must be viewed as a public-service corporation. Unlike the print press, in most European countries broadcast radio was not granted free right of establishment.

Also in Sweden, the State reserved the right to control the construction and organization of the new medium. The Telegraph Board, which was administered by the Ministry of Communications, was charged with the task. This may seem surprising today, considering the nature of the programme offerings. But radio was originally a technical matter. The reason was a law from 1907 concerning

the installation and employment of electrical equipment for wireless telegraphy or telephony, which prescribed that a government permit was required. This law, which had come into being long before the idea of broadcast radio had arisen, was thus used to justify that the State should have control over the new means of communication. The law did not, however, require the State to have a monopoly in the field. Compared to other countries, the Swedish Telegraph Board had a very strong position. The situation was, however, similar in Norway. In England, the BBC was administered by the General Post Office (the British postal and telephone authority).

In 1922, Seth Ljungqvist, head of the Telegraph Board's radio office, was tasked with proposing how Swedish radio should be organized. The decision was delayed because of differences of opinion with the radio industry, which had applied for the franchise (the license to conduct programming operations). Various events led to the private corporation Radiotjänst receiving the lucrative franchise in fall 1924. The Swedish press and the news agency TT (Tidningarnas Telegrambyrå) together owned two thirds of the shares, while the radio industry owned the remaining third. The Swedish solution to the broadcasting question was unique in that the new medium was largely placed in the hands of an already established and competing form of mass media. The transmission stations, on the other hand, were owned by the State and run by the Telegraph Board, which was the contracting party. Radiotjänst was thus subordinated to the Telegraph Board, a government department.

Apart from providing all technical equipment, Telegrafverket was to handle the collection of license fees and the allocation of funding to the broadcasting corporation. The Telegraph Board was also represented on the board of Radiotjänst, in the person of Seth Ljungqvist who came to have a very unique double role in the 1930s. He became vice chairman of Radiotjänst's board and then for many years was its chairman, at the same time as he remained the head of the Telegraph Board's radio office. This radio office managed the day-to-day work with broadcasting issues. According to the contract provisions, Telegrafverket was to procure and maintain all the technical equipment necessary recording the radio programmes and transmitting them to the broadcasting stations, including cables leading from the regular recording locations outside the studio premises (churches, concert halls, etc.) to the amplifier sections at various broadcasting stations. The radio stations were owned, maintained, and serviced by Telegrafverket, with the exception of those stations that belonged to private radio clubs, which were gradually taken over. Radiotjänst had no right of determination over the technical side of broadcast radio and exercised no oversight over how the radio office handled it.

Radiotjänst's technology when radio began in 1925

Radiotjänst did not employ any technicians of its own, despite the fact that the radio industry was a partner and had its own expertise in the field as well as experience of trial broadcasts of radio. The work was delegated to Telegrafverket personnel, who thereby got a foot in the door of the private broadcasting corporation's domain. The role of Telegrafverket was indicated by the fact that it owned and maintained the microphones and the connected cables. The stands for the microphones, however, belonged to Radiotjänst. The boundary between Telegrafverket and Radiotjänst accordingly came to be located at the microphone. Amplifiers and other technical equipment in the chain of transmission were naturally also the property of Telegrafverket. At the beginning, apart from a portable gramophone, the microphone was the only technical item located in the broadcasting corporation's studio. Very few technicians were needed for the day-to-day work.

From the very start, studio acoustics was an important area; this special branch of acoustics was in the experimental stage throughout the world. In this area as well, Radiotjänst did not employ an expert of its own, consulting instead with a staff engineer who had some experience of studio acoustics from Telegrafverket's 1922-1924 trial broadcasts. Telegrafverket was therefore responsible for the design of the new studio that was built in early 1925. At that time it was one of the largest in Europe, with an area of 75 m² and a volume of 300 m³. Later the same year, however, the Danish radio company built an even larger one (Jørgensen 1984: 25). Starting in 1928, telegraph superintendent Erik Mattsson, who had taken part in the trial broadcasts, began taking on more and more responsibility for the acoustics. Within a few years he would be put in charge of studio technology and he eventually reached the summit of his career as managing director of Sveriges Radio.

In a separate room adjacent to the new studio (the amplifier room), Telegrafverket installed amplifiers and a switching hub to connect programme locations to broadcasting stations out in the country. The studio had no separate control room. Radiotjänst soon needed more space, and in 1928 the company moved to a larger premises, located in an office building at Kungsgatan 8 in central Stockholm, where Telegrafverket's amplifier section was assigned an entire floor of its own. But even now, the telegraph assistants were brought in to help with the day-to-day work with the programmes. They were hired on secondment, their services being paid for by Radiotjänst.

When Radiotjänst officially began operating, programmes were transmitted directly from the studio or from locations to which special cables had been drawn. In the early years direct transmission from external events was common, not least when it came to music. Often, however, orchestras played in the studio. Music made up a sizeable portion of the offerings, around 40-45%.

It would be many years before the arrival of recording devices. In the early days, the studio only contained a microphone and a portable gramophone, which were operated by the announcer. The amplifiers, which were located in a separate room, were operated by telegraph assistants. On the question of rigging microphones, there are diverging opinions. One source reports that the telegraph assistants handled the task, while another says that it was the announcers. Presumably the announcers set up the microphones for the majority of programmes, and the telegraph assistants served as technicians for larger and more demanding programmes such as theatre and music, as well as for all programmes from other locations than those regularly used by Radiotjänst, for example churches and concert halls. For less complicated broadcasts, the formal responsibility undoubtedly lay with the announcers. These were trained by Erik Mattsson, who was paid by Radiotjänst to work as the broadcasting corporation's technical production expert and handle difficult microphone set-ups, both within and outside the studio. Over the years, with increasing quality demands, it became difficult to use the announcers as microphone technicians; they did not really possess the requisite skill, and they often were not available for morning rehearsals. In the early years, with the exception of weather and stock market reports, as well as the 12:30 time signal, broadcasting did not begin until late afternoon or early evening.

The magic of the microphone

The microphone in particular became something of a symbol of radio, like the beating heart of the company; many programmes had the word "microphone" in their titles, for example "The Microphone Wants to Know". Sven Jerring, who had taken part in the radio industry's trial broadcasts, had a certain familiarity with the microphone. That is not something that can be acquired without effort. He had listened to foreign announcers and thought that they trumpeted out their message; that was not how he wanted to sound. He wanted to talk with the listeners, not to them, rather like how you talked with a good friend on the telephone. He also learned to improvise, the art of filling in any undesirable silence that arises. For the listeners he personified radio; he became something of an institution. He figured on postcards and in bakeries as a marzipan. Radio may be a one-way form of communication, but from the very beginning feedback came in the form of letters from listeners. As a result, by pure chance, a new programme was born. During a pause between two programmes, Jerring read some letters from sick children. This was so well received that it became the origin of a special children's programme, *Barnens brevlåda* (The Children's letterbox), which he hosted well into the 1970s (Jerring 1944:75). At that time it was the world's longest-running programme. England also had

a children's show from the start, *Children's Hour*, first sent from Birmingham in 1922 (Crisell 1997:16).

During the first year of operations Sven Jerring also provided the first display of interactivity during an ongoing live broadcast. He was the announcer when a dance orchestra was playing in the studio and came up with what he thought was a brilliant idea, namely to let the listeners call in and request a favourite melody. Hundreds of listeners called at once, causing such chaos at the telephone station that the offer had to be withdrawn (Jerring 1944:33).

The announcer had an important function and contributed to what was unique about radio as a communications medium. "It's a delicate undertaking", as the 5th Yearbook (p. 275 f) points out. The same year, the head of national broadcasting explained that the announcer's task to link programmes together creates a warm connection between radio and listeners. The listeners were located in the home, and the announcer should therefore express himself with "the intimate tone of a good home" (Jonsson 1982:21).

That radio was a novelty was clearly shown in 1926 when Radiotjänst was to make a radio broadcast of an outdoors speech by the Swedish King, Gustav V, sitting on horseback before a detachment of troops. The microphone was hidden in a floral decoration so as not to disturb His Majesty. At the ceremonial opening of Parliament, which was also broadcast, it was not exposed either. The microphone was most likely perceived as a strange piece of technical paraphernalia, unfamiliar and a bit frightening. Cartoons often depicted a lecturer nervously trembling before a microphone. Lecturers and musicians were used to speaking or playing before an audience, but on the radio, the audience was both invisible and silent; the customary response was absent, which was perceived as negative. It could happen that lecturers who ordinarily could speak without a script got lost. Hilda Matheson, head of BBC's Talk Department 1927-1932, wrote tellingly about the magic of the microphone:

The microphone has a curious knack of showing what is real and unreal, what is clear and what is woolly, what is fact and purpose and what is stock phrase, what is sincere and what is an appeal to the gallery, what is constructive and what is destructive. (Scanell & Cardiff 1991:162).

Newspaper journalists and writers' use of language was an important factor in the press and to an even greater degree in the new medium of radio. In a text, an opaque sentence can be reread, but in radio it is lost in the ether. From the very start, Sven Jerring and his colleagues were aware of the importance of language. For many years they relied heavily on scripts. The radio management compiled practical tips for lecturers, who were required to submit scripts to be checked for language and method of delivery, as well as because the radio company wished to avoid controversial topics. Similar conditions prevailed in the Talk Department at the BBC:

The personality of speakers should shine through their words. But because all broadcasting was live, talks needed to be scripted. Otherwise what they gained in colloquialism and personal idiom they would lose in clarity and succinctness. (Scannell & Cardiff 1991:162).

Capturing the present moment

It is difficult for us today to understand how miraculous radio was. As a medium it surpassed even the printing press. Once the radio infrastructure was fully in place, it could reach most of the residents of the country at the same time and at great distances, which was something entirely unprecedented. C.A. Dymling, Head of Radio in the 1930s, aptly expressed this as follows: "Radio is (...) an unsurpassed means of communication, which in the shortest possible time can convey information to the greatest possible audience. It knows no borders" (25th Yearbook:38). Radio truly was boundless; in the early decades it was very common for listeners to tune in foreign radio stations. Crisell writes as follows about the sending of messages to a multitude of receivers: "Its original mode was live in the sense that the receivers were in the presence of the sender." Regarding the essence of radio he draws a parallel with another modern form of communication, the motor car:

What broadcasting did for one kind of communication the motor car did for another, transforming travel from something public and collective into a private, atomistic activity; and the consequences of this general tendency have been so diverse and far-reaching as to be almost incalculable (Crisell 1997:3 ff).

In the 1920s Sweden was a poor agricultural country in which many people lived far from any city or larger town that offered means of entertainment and enjoyment – such as theatre and concerts, and naturally also cinemas. Film, which also was a new medium, spread throughout the country and experienced its heyday together with that of radio. Nevertheless, people generally only had sporadic contact with means of entertainment and enjoyment. Radio's daily broadcasts gave listeners a wide range of programmes: music, lectures, church services, prayers, children's programmes, theatre, entertainment, news, literary readings, sports programmes, and coverage of various events. The offerings reached all and sundry, without regard to age or social class, which created a feeling of community. The programmes strengthened and advanced the newly inaugurated democratic process, which was important because many people lacked a daily newspaper.

The new medium incorporated earlier forms of communication such as music and theatre, and many features of the print media had counterparts in radio, for example news, commentary, and reviews. The BBC, which served as

a model for many broadcasting corporations in Europe, also had a wide range of programmes; that was the core of John Reith's public service philosophy. It could also draw listeners into new topical areas.

The highminded intention was continually to renew the listener's alertness to the medium, not only to make her listen instead of merely hear but to "surprise" her into an interest in a subject she had previously not known about or disliked, and at all times to give her "something a little better than she thought she wanted." (Crisell 1997:23).

In his dissertation, Rasmus Fleischer writes that "mediation always involves the serial coupling of several media." He draws the following conclusion, which is very applicable to radio as a medium: "No forms of media are entirely new, because they are always linked with and 'remediate' earlier forms" (Fleischer 2012:45).

From the beginning, reporting had a natural place in the programme listings. The significance that was accorded to it is indicated in the 5th Yearbook of 1929 (p. 95):

Never does radio have a better opportunity to show what an unsurpassable means of communication it can be than when the microphone emerges from the studio and can take its place in the midst of life's bustle, convey to listeners its pulse, and make the entire world participants in what is happening. Here if anywhere radio's essential nature becomes evident: its ability to reflect time, not figuratively but literally, to capture the moment, release it from its ties to space, and let it beam back out over boundless distances to all corners of the land.

No other contemporary medium could create this sense of being part of an event, being bombarded with impressions, and experiencing things as they occur not only in Sweden but in other countries as well. Not only that, you could listen to famous persons, Swedish or foreign, as if they were in your own home. You could take part in such diverse things as the ceremonial opening of Parliament, royal weddings, the departure of ships to America, various kinds of inaugurations, Nobel dinners, sporting events, and more. Listeners were constantly being transported to new places. A listener in 1932 thought that the loneliness of the countryside had disappeared: "You just have to grab your radio receiver and – hey presto – just like in a fairy tale you can hear what's being said in Stockholm, Gothenburg, Sundsvall, etc." (Löfgren 1990:101).

In cases where it was not possible to transmit directly from the event, Radiotjänst nevertheless strived to give listeners the illusion of participating, for example in 1925 at Prime Minister Hjalmar Branting's funeral. Sven Jerring and the head of programming took turns travelling by car to selected locations along the path of the cortège to gather impressions and converse with watchers;

hundreds of thousands of people lined the streets. At the evening broadcast from the studio they took turns at the microphone with hastily thrown together scripts, lending the broadcast the character of live coverage of the lengthy cortège (Jerring 1944:43 f). This was Swedish radio's first coverage of an event, albeit an indirect one, and the first live coverage was soon to come in the form of a live interview with the winner of the major skiing competition *Vasaloppet*.

There are many examples in the programme offerings that one did not hesitate to attempt complex coverage, something in which technicians played a crucial role. Perhaps this was an expression of an experimental desire. Sven Jerring, who for a long time was the only reporter, brought the microphone for a visit deep in the Falun copper mine; another time he reported from a submerged submarine. The high point came in summer 1929, when he stood for the then largest airborne broadcast in the world, which turned out not to be an entirely risk-free undertaking. In it, a new and fast means of communication, aviation, was united with an equally fast and new ether medium, by means of which the reporter could not only convey the fantastic experience of flying but also describe the vistas he saw from his seat on the plane directly to the listeners. Aviation pioneer Albin Ahrenberg was to take his single-engine Junker aircraft "Sverige" (Sweden) from Stockholm, via Iceland and Greenland, to New York, though the journey unfortunately ended in Greenland. It was decided that Jerring, who two years earlier had made an airborne broadcast over Stockholm, would follow along as far as Bergen, Norway, a hazardous 754 kilometre flight that passed over dizzying alpine areas in Norway. To be heard over the noise of the engine in the little plane he used a laryngophone, that is, a throat microphone. Technicians at various receiving stations along the flight path received Jerring's reports by shortwave radio and sent them on to Stockholm for live broadcast on the radio (Jerring 1944:146).

In the earliest years, Radiotjänst's technicians undertook many radio experiments with the simple means at their disposal. One good example is a bird concert in spring 1931 from the large lake Tåkern, where among other species 2,000 whooper swans would regularly land on their way north. The preparations for this live broadcast were long and tedious; they lasted 14 days with many trial broadcasts. Telegrafverket had erected provisional telephone poles for cables and placed 7-8 microphones on ice flows and posts around an open ford in the creek through which Tåkern empties. Along the shore they had set up a tent to store equipment. How did it sound on the radio? One of the daily papers waxed poetic: "The whooper swans sang the first part, resonant and clear, the mute swans were a bit more muffled, and the coots chattered keenly and a bit cross, just like old gossips." The broadcast was considered quite unique in an international perspective (*Stockholms-Tidningen* 6.6.1931).

Early Norwegian radio also displayed a keen desire to experiment. In March 1925, the month before their official start, they had fixed cables between the

sports arena Holmenkollen and the studio in Oslo, and in this way they slipped in ahead of Radiotjänst with the first account of a sporting event. The Norwegian telegraph technicians were so successful that in 1927 they made broadcasts from a train in motion on a railway line to Oslo. Along the way they had built receivers that were linked together with telephone lines (Andersen 1999:14). Here too we see radio being combined with another means of communication.

Innovations within production technology

From the very start, technicians from Telegrafverket worked enthusiastically to improve the production technology within the new medium; they even constructed their own devices, as was done in other countries as well. Up until the Second World War, the pace of development was intense, though it declined during the war years. Early on, Radiotjänst entered a partnership with Aga-Baltic, as well as with broadcasting corporations in the neighbouring countries. Purchases were often made in Germany, the primary supplier being Telefunken.

Acoustics in constant development

In its first years, Radiotjänst had a general-purpose studio that was used for all kinds of programmes but was not especially well-suited for any of them. After the move to Kungsgatan 8, different-sized studios were built that had more differentiated acoustics and were adapted to the differing natures of the programmes in order to make listening more enjoyable. Sound-absorbing materials were used to reduce the echo that arises when sound does not only go directly to the microphone, but also bounces off the floor, walls, and roof of the room. Every programme must therefore have an acoustically correct milieu, not least when it comes to music and theatre. A room could contain harmful echoes that disturbed the balance between different groups of instruments in the orchestra. In such cases, one needed to place the microphones extremely close to the sound source to reduce the effect of the harmful echoes. The music studios were considerably larger in volume and less dampened than the theatre studios, which also were large, but were more heavily dampened to enable the actors to move about freely. A lecture or reading often needed to have a cosy feeling. To achieve it, the microphone was placed in a relatively dampened studio.

Improvements in microphones, amplifiers, audio signal cables, transmitters, and even radios in the 1930s placed even greater demands on the acoustic design of studios. Studios were rebuilt according to new principles and findings, and new ones were built as well. Thanks to the invention of better measuring instruments it became easier to check the studios' characteristics.

The driving force and expert behind this was Erik Mattsson who, one could say, was passionately devoted to acoustics. Radiotjänst sought to achieve the highest conceivable quality, and therefore in the 1930s the studio technicians were tasked with listening to broadcasts at home and intervening by telephone if they sounded bad. In addition, various categories of musicians and technicians met every week in special acoustic room to go through recordings, and sometimes compare them with earlier recordings. They took note of flaws and how to fix them. They even went so far as to compare them with commercial music recordings on records and with other countries' radio concerts. No programme went out into the ether until the technicians responsible had approved it for broadcast, and this has remained the case until modern times (Mattsson 1944, 1949).

Gramophone music

Commercial gramophone records were of great use in providing a large selection of musical offerings. They could also have a practical application. When performers relieved each other at the microphone, music was needed so the switch could occur with no disturbance. In the earliest years, things were so primitive that the music was acoustically transferred from the gramophone to the microphone. An ordinary portable gramophone was quite simply placed before the microphone, which picked up the sound waves emitted by the membrane in the gramophone's pick-up. Later came electronic playback of records using a more modern pick-up. Gramophone music played a marginal role at first. Alf Björnberg mentions that those in charge of music programming considered it "a blemished surrogate for real music, i.e. live musical performance" (Björnberg 1998:37).

Nevertheless, the use of gramophone music grew in scale and demanded better technical resources. A five-year partnership with Aga-Baltic, with Erik Mattsson in the background, resulted in the first gramophone table with twin turntables for playback. Now it was a simple matter to play longer pieces of music that were recorded on more than one disc. This equipment was procured and paid for by Radiotjänst.

The construction of the first control board

The control desk went through a similar process of development as the gramophone table. As years passed, studio- and amplifier technology improved; another significant development was the construction of mixing devices, which made it possible to use several microphones simultaneously. All these technical contrivances were combined into a control desk (editing table). Later came the amplifier switcher, monitoring systems with speakers, and the talk back

microphone. At first there were no amplifiers mounted in the control desk, which was designed by Erik Mattsson. These developments made possible more complex programmes, and were of great importance, especially for theatre and music broadcasts. Artistic and directorial expectations were imposed on the work. The control room came into existence because the directors needed to be as close as possible to the actors; hence the room was placed directly adjacent to the studio.

During rehearsals and broadcasts of plays and similar programmes the director and studio technicians jointly worked the switches and speakers in the control rooms. With music programmes, at least two people generally monitored the sound, one with technical and one with musical training. Usually one of the studio technicians had the score in front of him and performed the necessary operations of connecting the different microphones and adjusting signal strengths. The other concentrated on listening to be able to give directions for making fine adjustments to optimize the final result.

The lacquer disc enters the scene

There is no evidence that programme producers yearned to be able to make recordings. In fact it was through sheer coincidence that Radiotjänst's first recording device was purchased in 1931. The head of national broadcasting at that time "discovered" one in Vienna and bought it on the spot. It was a record cutter with only one turntable and had a built-in amplifier. Later a unit was bought that was manufactured by AEG and standardized for German Rundfunk. It had two disc turntables, which improved its usability. The discs were originally made of celluloid, but these were later replaced by lacquer on an aluminium core, the so-called lacquer discs. These were not as durable as ordinary gramophone records, however, and had a short playing time, about three or four minutes per disc. With the help of these recording devices it became possible after a year or so to make recordings from various parts of Sweden. However the device remained firmly installed in Stockholm; the recordings were done via telephone lines from the recording site.

The recording technology enabled Radiotjänst to record European radio corporations' news reports that came in by telephone lines, which also contributed to the feeling that radio was in the midst of events. An example is the opening of the disarmament conference in Geneva in February 1932, or even more remarkable, a year later when a dialogue was broadcast between J. Maynard Keynes in London and Walter Lippman in New York about the important world economic conference in Britain.

It was not possible to edit the records, but many technicians became skilled at using wax pencils to mark the segments to be broadcast live. Often there were several items, and it was necessary to quickly switch between the two

turntables. This demanded a level of precision verging on craftsmanship. The record cutters were improved over time in a partnership with Aga-Baltic. During World War Two there was a shortage of lacquer discs, and Radiotjänst was forced to reuse previously recorded discs. The use of discs increased after the armistice despite the fact that other methods of recording had come into use. More than 4,000 records were made in 1942; five years later the number climbed to 10,000 and reached a peak of 20,000 in 1952. It was not until 1955 that Radiotjänst ceased recording lacquer records.

The steel tape machine, unwieldy but effective

In the mid 1930s the expensive and bulky steel tape machine came into use, the so-called Marconi-Stille recorder, which weighed 450 kg. The machine was demonstrated for Radiotjänst's technicians in Stockholm in fall 1935. The steel tape, manufactured by Munkfors iron and steel works in Sweden for the English company, was 3 km long, 3 mm wide, and 0.08 mm thick. The reel was large in diameter and weighed about 15 kg. To make a recording, the tape passed a recording head which magnetized the tape to make it carry sound. The steel tape was durable and allowed for a long, uninterrupted recording time, 30 minutes, which was very beneficial for such types of programmes as radio theatre, operettas, cabarets, and concerts. After rewinding, the tape could immediately reproduce the recorded programme. Another advantage of the steel tape machine was that the tape could be used an unlimited number of times, because one could magnetically erase previously recorded programs. The recording equipment was entirely owned by Radiotjänst, who also stood for maintenance, which was a not insignificant step in the development toward greater autonomy in the area of technology. Telegrafverket had namely withdrawn from a planned purchase after it was rejected by Seth Ljungqvist. Therefore it had to be financed with programming funds. It is possible that the purchase was delayed for reasons of cost. BBC had already been using the steel tape machine for four years, and it could be found in several radio corporations in Europe: Belgium, France, Poland, Switzerland and Czechoslovakia.

The steel tape could sometimes break during recording, requiring a complicated welding job to repair it, but most troublesome were the so-called broken transitions that arose when several tapes were used for a recording. It was necessary to find an appropriate place, perhaps a natural pause, where the first tape could end and the next one begin. It sometimes happened that the switch came a fraction of a second too late. Avoiding an annoying gap in the transmission demanded complicated and time-consuming effort by the technicians. Apart from at the beginning, the quality was very good, superior to lacquer discs. The three steel tape machines that Radiotjänst bought were used for about ten years.

The recording equipment goes mobile

Sometimes it was sheer chance that drove the development forward; in such cases it was in combination with other means of communication. On one occasion Telegrafverket did not have time to draw lines for a recording. So the recording equipment was put on a truck and taken to the recording site. According to Erik Mattsson, this expedition caused great excitement among the radio staff, who realized the enormous potential that awaited. The then head of radio C.A. Dymling equipped Danish explorer Henning Haslund with this heavy recording device for his expedition to Mongolia in 1936, during which it was transported on pack horses. A 1935 broadcast from Valamo Monastery, located on a Finnish island in Lake Ladoga, was a large recording project. It was sent by wire to Helsinki to be transmitted on to Stockholm. The programme contained magnificent sound backdrops: the booming of the 16 ton church bell and the monks' evocative choir song (Jerring 1944:171 ff). In other programmes the heavy record cutters went to sea, for example to a lightship in 1939. A pilot boat that lay about a hundred metres from the lightship with its engines turned off had the record cutter on board. The programme staff rowed over to the lightship with a microphone that was connected by a cord to the record cutter in the pilot boat (40th Yearbook:285).

The next step in the development was the construction of a recording car in 1936. It was a seven-seat Volvo automobile equipped with gramophone recording gear from Telefunken. The microphone amplifier, build by the amplifier section, and the power supply were placed in the boot of the car. The recording car was owned by Radiotjänst, with the exception of some items of technical equipment. Johan von Utfall, Radiotjänst's own technician, constructed the recording car and waxed poetic when he exhibited it for the press: "There's something more fresh and immediate about not needing to drag people into the studio, where they often are taken aback by the unfamiliar environment, and instead being able to go up to a farmer in the middle of ploughing his field and talk to him there" (*Dagens Nyheter* 24.7.1936). In the press it was maintained that Sweden was probably the first country in the world to build a special recording car. This was not actually the case, though. Radiotjänst was admittedly a few years ahead of Finland, but Norwegian radio already had a recording car in 1935. First among the Nordic countries, however, was Denmark, whose radio car from 1932 contained a broadcasting room and a small studio (Andersen 1999:89 f; Rundradion 1926-1995:246; Jørgensen 1984: 64 f, 75).

Thanks to the recording car, the programming became more timely, because the time-consuming process of drawing lines long distances was no longer always necessary. Another factor affecting timeliness was that if there was not enough time to send the records to Radiotjänst for the evening broadcast, the technician could play them in the car and transmit the sound through the telephone net. With the help of the recording car, one began experimenting

with new program formats that had audio illustrations, or sound pictures as they also were called. The programme creators were not, however, the first to get to use the recording car. Instead three Swedish authors used it to create travel diaries in the series *Swedish moods and landscapes*, in which they each covered different sections of the wide-stretching country of Sweden. With the help of the technicians they recorded ambient sound and interviews, which were meant to give listeners not only a sense of authenticity, but also the impression of being in the midst of events. Radiotjänst's own programme creators then undertook extensive reporting trips, not only in Sweden but also in other Scandinavian countries; the excitement of discovery was palpable. Many reports were about common people and local communities, but it was also popular to visit industries with the microphone. Radio depicted the ongoing transitions that typified the 1930s, when the old agricultural society gave way to an emerging industrial nation.

Few people had the privilege of travelling at that time, but with the help of radio listeners could now broaden their outlook. The world shrank. The recording car took listeners to the Paris World Fair in 1937; it travelled the Seine, and then the canals of Holland. In both cases the car was loaded onto a tugboat. The recording car was even transported to North America, where for several months in 1937 Sven Jerring travelled around the Swedish settlements with telegraph assistant Axel Hedin, who also served as a driver. This documentary journey was the largest broadcasting project to date in Swedish radio. They began recording while still on the Atlantic steamer "*Drottningholm*". Hedin had to draw a line from the car, which was stowed at the bottom of the ship, to the upper decks. He and Jerring communicated by telephone, which had its own lines. Hedin always performed the often strenuous work of drawing lines alone; Jerring did not help out, or rather, was not expected to help. When they reported about the Chicago police, Hedin pulled lines up to the sixth floor. Their large supply of lacquer discs finally ran out, and replacements were bought from the American firm Presto. These turned out to be of better quality – there was almost no noise – and from then on Radiotjänst imported American discs in addition to the French ones. According to Jerring the recording car attracted a great deal of attention in the USA, where programming work was more tied to the studios (Jerring 1944:182 ff). Whether this meant that the Americans did not have a recording car is unclear. In any case, they did have one when in 1939, when a Norwegian reporting team visiting the USA bought a seven-seat Plymouth equipped with two record cutters (Andersen 1999:89).

The next Swedish recording car was a bus, built and outfitted by Aga-Baltic in 1937. It had hyper-modern equipment, among other things its own electricity source. The bus was built on a 2 1/2 ton lorry chassis from Volvo, on which a specially constructed body was mounted. The bus had a recording table like those found in the studio. It was nothing less than a miniature studio, but even

here Danish radio was a step ahead. The Swedish bus had room to store a total of 2000 metres of wire. The bus was intended to be used in the northernmost parts of Sweden, where it was not always so easy to get around. By 1944, Radiotjänst had a fleet of five recording cars, which gives an indication of how important the mobile unit had become for programming activities.

The first recording car is associated with the new programme policy launched in 1936, with former radio theatre head C.A. Dymling as managing director and national head of broadcasting. The distinctly radio-like production qualities that had developed in the preceding years were strengthened. Now greater mobility and variety were sought after. The time had come “to present material in a form suitable for the specific expressive possibilities of radio”. Mixed programmes were produced that combined music, interviews, readings, ambient sound, and reporting. Reporting is highlighted above all else in the 1936 Annual Report, which devoted an entire section to the topic. The rising importance of production technology also was devoted a section of its own a few years later.

When King Gustav V turned 80 in 1938, the most ambitious production effort to date was undertaken, which gives an indication of the resources that could be brought to bear. The celebrations were described from 14 locations in Stockholm. In addition to the regular lines, 96 km of extra wire were used, 33 amplifiers and 24 mixers more than usual were used, and 79 microphones were put in place. To enable staff to communicate with each other, a telephone net was constructed to accommodate 49 telephones (Annual Report 1938:55).

The first Magnetophon recorders

Significantly easier to handle than earlier recording devices, the Magnetophon tape recorder had a light and thin acetate tape coated with an oxide that could be magnetized by a relatively small machine. It also was possible, which was a novelty, to cut and splice the thin tape, and a single reel had at least 20 minutes of recording capacity. Radiotjänst bought its first Magnetophon from Germany at the end of the 1930s. Early units suffered from disturbing noise; the quality was not comparable with that of lacquer discs and steel tape recorders. Johan von Utfall worked together with Paavo Arni, his counterpart in Finland's broadcasting company Finlands Rundradio, to reduce the distortion. Arni often visited Germany, where he had many contacts, and he shared his findings with Utfall when passing through Stockholm on the return journey. The same year as the purchase, a Magnetophon recorder was placed in one of the recording cars. But there were also other means of transport: trains and airplanes. In 1943, for example, portable Magnetophons were installed in the Railway General's old saloon carriage, so that Sven Jerring could make a journey from the Sweden's northernmost border to the far south of the coun-

try to greet the arrival of spring. Three years later the Magnetophon recorder was used by another reporter on a Stockholm-Paris flight. This reproduction technology gave programming staff the possibility to collect a large amount of raw material, which could be edited and processed to an extent not previously possible. The production of various kinds of mixed programmes – rhapsodies, chronicle plays, features, social reporting, and entertainment shows – was facilitated. The quality of programmes improved considerably. The same could be said of the editing of parliamentary debates, which Radiotjänst began with in 1947; in other countries such recordings were not undertaken until much later. Programming staff nevertheless still relied on technicians to handle the recording and editing tasks in the studio. Programme creator Lars Madsén has said that the editing techniques improved to the point that some technicians became virtuosos: “They could make eloquent speakers out of stutterers, if the need arose” (40th Yearbook:197). Tape recording came into more widespread use only after the Second World War, because of import difficulties, but its real breakthrough was not until the 1950s, before which lacquer discs were used to a great extent. Strangely enough, Magnetophon technology did not come to the attention of the American radio companies. It was only with the occupation of Germany that they found out about it and began to manufacture their own magnetic tape recorders.

Despite all the improvements of reproduction technology during the second half of the 1930s, most programmes were still broadcast live. According to Olof Forsén, Sven Jerring initially preferred the excitement and fascination of live reporting. He warned his younger colleagues against putting blind faith in technological shortcuts or detours: “Our strength lies in the present moment – don’t miss the chance!” Perhaps Jerring was thinking about those technicians and colleagues who exhibited an “almost superstitious worship” of recording technology; such people existed as well. They had to deal with criticism from detractors who claimed that it had become impossible to talk about, for example, the West Coast, in a lecture or a poem, “without the sound of waves roaring, motors chugging, and sails slapping”. And if it was about a farm, it was obligatory to have hens cackling and cows mooing in the background (Forsén 1966:69, 78).

With the arrival of recording, Forsén understood the need to take advantage of the opportunity the new technology provided, namely to capture the immediacy of events even when it was not possible to broadcast live, and when one otherwise would have to merely report about them later. Forsén saw this as a major step forward in reporting. To a much greater extent than before, we could have “the entire Swedish people as contributors”, as he enthusiastically put it. Both he and Lars Madsén collected lengthy recordings on lacquer and tape, when reporting on common people and local communities. The difference between them was that Forsén had high standards of authenticity. One must

not deceive the listeners. He wanted to do reporting, not features or dramatized scenes. Madsén, on the other hand, shifted individual sentences around like the radio-theatre director that he also was. So what was the technical quality like? I have listened to countless programmes from the 1930s and have been surprised by their high level of quality. Of course, we do not know for sure how they sounded in radios. Listening conditions were not always the best in the vast country of Sweden with its high mountains and alpine landscapes.

Recording strongly influenced another area as well, according to Olof Forsén. The practice of broadcasting live had caused many people, even experienced speakers, to become microphone shy. It was nerve-racking to speak directly into the ether; the situation easily became stiff and unnatural. Some of this fear of the microphone disappeared with recording, which led to a freer and more natural way of speaking on the radio. Thanks to the recording cars, reporters could often reach environments where the people being interviewed felt at home. This could lead them to experience a spontaneous narrative enthusiasm (Forsén 1966:222). This is highlighted in a report from the north of Sweden in 1936: "The microphone can sneak into the midst of their everyday life and hear people talk the way they do under ordinary circumstances, without scripts or rehearsals" (Jonsson 1982:42). Preserved recordings show that the programme creators also adopted a freer language, and their way of addressing listeners become more informal. Their previous method of working – which included preparatory conversations with the person to be interviewed, followed by the writing of scripted questions and answers – disappeared. After all, it was always possible to try again. Forsén maintained in 1949 that "it was progress in the area of technology that helped us adopt a freer and more natural language on the radio" (25th Yearbook:222).

The VHF band comes into use

At the end of the 1930s, the radio corporations in Norway and Finland began using very high frequency transmitters to transfer programmes to the studios. Radiotjänst fell behind with its more primitive equipment manufactured by Aga. The Norwegian and Finnish radio corporations were quick to employ the VHF band in broadcasting operations. On one occasion, while Olof Forsén was part of a Nordic reporting trip in Finland, the Finnish technician demonstrated VHF on a dizzying boat trip down a rapids. A number of times in the winter of 1940, Forsén joined Norwegian colleagues and technicians for reporting expeditions to remote mountainous regions of northern Norway: "We dragged along 1,000 kg of technical baggage on twenty reindeer sleds day after day to be able to make these recordings, and with the help of VHF and record cutters, and four or five Norwegian technicians, it went off without a hitch" (Forsén 1966:80 ff). One time the transmitter was placed in a Sami hut many miles from the nearest

human habitation. This reporting expedition was so remarkable that it received special mention in Radiotjänst's 1940 Annual Report (p. 21 f).

Recording cars became even more useful in 1942, when they were equipped with improved VHF transmitters which could transmit directly to Radiotjänst's studios without the support of Telegrafverket. The VHF technology facilitated live broadcasts from mobile events such as royal cortèges, national fitness hikes, and sporting competitions. In June 1943, a relay race was covered from the roof of a recording car. The "shortwave car" made it possible to make live broadcasts of musical request tours using the "flying microphone" in Stockholm and other public places around the country: *What may we play for you?* Listeners could request a record, which was rapidly located in the gramophone archive and played at Kungsgatan 8 for the listeners and the people around the shortwave car. In the 1944 Annual Report (p. 22) this was described as "an instance of collaborative reporting between the public, a shortwave car, and Radiotjänst's gramophone archive." In the mid 1940s Radiotjänst's technical department experimented with a portable transmitter worn on the back. Once a reporter was sent out on a bicycle, with the transmitter on his back, and given the task to bike around a busy thoroughfare in central Stockholm, running red lights no less. While underway he reported live on the radio news programme. That is how important it was for listeners to learn about the new device. To be able to take advantage of the weak transmitter in larger contexts, it was necessary for one of the recording cars to be nearby to relay the transmission to Kungsgatan 8. The idea behind the portable transmitter was to use it for street reporting and sporting competitions. Sven Jerring used it at the Olympic Stadium in Stockholm during a football match where he was one of the players, and his colleague Lennart Hyland commented from a sulky while reporting on harness racing in 1946.

The introduction of light portable tape recorders

The great innovation of the 1950s was tape recorders that easily could be carried in one hand by programme makers. The first was the Maihak, which was rather unwieldy at first and had to be wound up by hand. Not only that, it could only record for 6-7 minutes at a time. It was subsequently improved, and at the end of the decade it was replaced by the significantly heavier Nagra, manufactured in Switzerland by the Kudelski company. Thanks to these tape recorders, a recording could be quickly and easily arranged, both at home and abroad. At the same time programme creators could manage recordings themselves without the assistance of technicians, though it took a remarkably long time for this to become widely practiced. Many people wanted a technician to be present at the recording session in order to be able to concentrate fully on the interview.

Launching and developing a technical innovation can be a slow process sometimes. Head of Technology Kjell Stensson saw stereo as offering “a rebirth of the possibilities of sound” when he made the first stereo recording on tape in 1954. Stereo, which conveyed such a wonderful sense of immediacy, and captured sound sources in motion, was something he wanted to see adopted during the 1960s. But he had to wait until the final years of the following decade. The question of stereo broadcasting had become stuck in the machinery of state investigations (*Tala till och tala med* 1984:228).

A new profession emerges

Not many years had passed before Radiotjänst’s programming staff had many and various technical aids for their everyday programming operations and in this way they became increasingly dependent on technical staff. Both operating and maintaining the new devices required technical ability, especially when it came to the control board; and a new profession emerged. Erik Mattsson and his colleagues at Telegrafverket were given tasks that in many respects differed from their regular duties there. Their chores at the broadcasting corporation belonged to the work of creating programmes. Thus to an even greater extent than before – when they only handled microphone placements and acoustics issues – they came to operate within the domain of the broadcasting corporation. Their salaries were also paid by Radiotjänst.

By 1930, studio technology had grown to such an extent that it required its own studio manager. Erik Mattsson received that post, and a few years later he also became head of the amplifier section. The decision to place the managerial position directly beneath the head of national broadcasting shows what an important role technology had come to have for programming operations. Studio technology was not an end in itself, but was part of creating programmes. Exercising command over Telegrafverket’s personnel was undoubtedly made easier by the fact that Mattsson was still a telegraph official. His management posts straddled the shaky boundary zone between Telegrafverket and the broadcasting corporation. All activities of a technical nature were to be led and coordinated by him. In a relatively short time, Mattsson had acquired a strong position within Radiotjänst.

Among Erik Mattsson’s many duties as studio manager was to serve as a technical expert assisting directors, band leaders, and others with programmes both inside and outside the corporation’s studios. During dramatic and musical broadcasts he was to keep himself informed about any artistic ambitions and if necessary point out technical difficulties and risks. During the early years, as better equipment came into use in live broadcasts, opportunities arose to achieve not only better technical quality, but also more refined programme

production. The control board, the operation of which demanded both technical skill and a sensitivity to various kinds of artistic goals, early on became a source of irritation between the broadcasting corporation and Telegrafverket. The demands now being made by the programming staff, especially when it came to music and theatre, could for obvious reasons not be fulfilled by all telegraphic technicians, even if there were some exceptions. Sometimes it happened that the amplifier section raised the sound level, when the director or programme creator intended for it to be low, which caused frictions.

Early on Radiotjänst instituted the requirement that musically trained personnel should be present at the control board for larger concert and choir programmes or entertainment shows with musical interludes. To this end, two members of the programming staff received technical training. One had attended the Music Academy before being trained in 1933 to handle the musical direction for larger concert and choir programmes. The other was saddled with the cabarets. This was an early step away from the arrangement that Telegrafverket's personnel should handle all technical work. The next step came in 1933, when Radiotjänst hired its first full-time technician, engineer Johan von Utfall, who had no ties whatsoever to Telegrafverket. He became Erik Mattsson's assistant in studio matters and electroacoustics.

Recording equipment played a very important role in the expansion of Radiotjänst's own technical capacity. The growth of recording technology in the mid 1930s naturally created a need for more personnel, and hiring them on secondment caused practical difficulties. To deal with the situation, the broadcasting corporation began in the late 1930s to recruit technicians to the recording section from trade schools in Stockholm. The trend of development was now for Telegrafverket's personnel to be used less in the control rooms at Kungsgatan 8 than previously.

Around this time Erik Mattsson began to be of the opinion that Radiotjänst's authority ought to extend as far as possible toward the transmitter station. The possibilities afforded by production technology ought not to be cut off too early; Radiotjänst should be in control of all volume adjustments. Hence Radiotjänst should be responsible for sound quality up to and including the output to the lines leading to the transmitter station, hence also the amplifier section. Because Telegrafverket owned and maintained a large portion of the technical equipment at Radiotjänst, this caused confusion among the technicians on both sides, and even led to conflicts between the two groups. The conflicts mostly existed at a high level, but in my interviews it emerged that the technicians often sensed them in their daily work.

Erik Mattsson and a few centrally placed telegraph assistants went over to Radiotjänst in 1942, further exacerbating the frictions between the broadcasting corporation on the one hand and Telegrafverket's radio office and amplifier section on the other. A thorough revision conducted by the 1943 Radio Com-

mission found that the implementation of technical improvements had become chaotic and opaque, both in terms of personnel and materials. The investigation concluded that it was unfortunate to have two divisions, answering to separate organizations, whose duties were so interwoven that the boundaries between them were difficult to specify. Mattsson maintained that it was natural and necessary for the entire production staff to work under the same management: "a programme can only be created through intimate and smooth collaboration from start to finish between persons representing both artistic and technical skills." The organizational structure must take account of the fact that over the years programme production had created completely new occupational groups. A programme technician, for example, belonged to an occupational group with a distinctive character due to his (it was still an all-male profession) work with programmes. In addition to technical skill, he needed an aptitude for working together with reporters, directors, and conductors, all of whom placed artistic demands on the work. He also needed a good portion of musical judgment.

The Telegraph Board also thought that all technical operations should be run by one and the same organization. Because most of the links in the programme transmission chain were inseparably connected with Telegrafverket's operations, it was natural for technical matters to be handled and led by that agency. The Telegraph Board therefore demanded that Radiotjänst hand over the production technology that had been created within the broadcasting corporation.

In 1946 the Radio Commission recommended a division of the technology. The broadcasting corporation would be responsible for technical aspects of programme production. Telegrafverket for its part would be responsible for programme distribution, which comprised a network of cables to transmit programmes locally and nationally. The Commission also recommended that Radiotjänst henceforth should conclude agreements directly with the Ministry of Communications. This had been a firmly expressed desire of the programming management, and meant that the Telegraph Board would lose its superior position. The government and parliament had no objections. Nevertheless, operations continued in the same fashion as before; the Telegraph Board refused to concede the technology issue, which had become a question of prestige. In 1953 the Telegraph Board was finally overruled by the Ministry of Communications and the separation of staff and materials came about. High-level antagonisms lingered on, however, not disappearing until the 1960s.

Conclusion

Radio was the first true mass medium, in the sense that transmissions at one and the same moment reached a mass audience, and could penetrate into people's homes and influence their daily lives. Because for many years everything

was broadcast live, listeners were united with events as they unfolded. Radio was far reaching, not only in terms of contents and message, but also physical distance. Powerful transmitters could have an enormous reach. The technical chain from microphone to transmitter was taken care of by Telegrafverket (The Telegraph Agency) in Sweden, while the task of producing content was delegated to a private corporation, Radiotjänst. It is noteworthy that the genres of the programme offerings were taken from the daily and weekly press. But radio incorporated much else that can be found in society as well: lectures, concerts, and theatre. Radio could contain anything. Newspaper production was handled by journalists and printers, with radio it was programme creators and sound engineers. Both occupational groups were equally important, even if the technical staff were anonymous. There was, however, a difference between the technical staff in the two different forms of media: the radio technicians worked together with the programme staff, as well as with other occupational groups such as directors, musicians, and various kinds of performers. The technical staff in radio were unique in another respect as well; they constructed devices and other technical aids, thereby pushing the development forward. They possessed a wealth of inventiveness and desire to experiment, which also can be observed in other countries' broadcasting corporations. From the very start, the listener was prioritized. To make it as enjoyable as possible to listen, acoustics were emphasized, an effort that has continued uninterrupted until today. The gramophone table and control board were constructed and improved. Gramophone tables greatly facilitated the playing of gramophone records, which benefited not only the technicians, but also listeners, who enjoyed smoother transitions when long pieces of music requiring switching discs were played. The control boards with mixing devices made it possible for directors to try out different microphones in live transmissions, which yielded a more authentic radio theatre, one in which audio impressions were even more important for the listener's experience than they were for the audience of a stage play, who could observe actors' body language and gestures. The control board played an equally important role for live music, which required a judicious balancing of the different instruments. The emergence of more advanced technology demanded not only greater knowledge on the part of the technical staff, but also a greater sensitivity to the artistic aspects of music and theatre, for example. Not all the telegraph technicians had an aptitude for this, of course, but over time specialized music and theatre technicians emerged. When programming staff began giving programmes a more radio-like form, this placed further demands on the technicians. A process of give and take arose. Directors and orchestra leaders probably stimulated the technicians in important ways. At the same time, it is evident that the technicians were willing to experiment, as can be seen in the early reporting. One can say that overall it was the technical staff who pushed the development forward.

What was the impact of the invention of recording equipment? At first it was not of any particular significance. Live broadcasting continued as before; it remained the most prevalent form well into the 1950s. In the early period the ability to make recordings was mostly significant for lectures and shorter programmes. Steel tape machines changed this somewhat, as it became possible to record entire theatrical performances and concerts. But it still resembled live broadcasting because it was not possible to edit the steel tape. One major advantage was that it became easier to hire actors, because recording could now be done during the day.

Things changed when record cutters were improved and became mobile with the help of different modern means of communication. One could record things that could not be transmitted directly because they took place during the times of day when radio was not broadcast. Recording on location caused much of the formality that accompanied the microphone to disappear, and the interviews acquired a freer language. Reporting improved with the possibility to insert interview segments and ambient sound to make broadcasts come even more alive. The real breakthrough for recording technology was the 1936 introduction of the recording car. It could reach areas where it was impossible or very difficult to draw cables. Now the recording process was boundless, just like the medium itself. The recording car was used to make documentary journeys to the other Nordic countries and Europe, and even to the USA. If the world had been made smaller by the invention of radio, it was brought even closer to listeners by these documentary journeys. The frequent use of the recording cars made the programme offerings more up to date. The period of transition between the old agricultural society and the emerging modern Sweden left its mark on the reporting, and a conspicuous amount of industrial reporting was done. It is no exaggeration to say that with its coverage, radio also contributed to bringing provinces closer to each other and creating a sense of community; until 1955 there was only one single channel. After 1936 there was a clear effort to truly take advantage of radio's innate qualities. The new technology made possible such mixed programme formats as rhapsodies and chronicle plays. All the improvements came to benefit the listeners. Radio was popular, as can be seen in the large and continuously growing number of licenses.

The Second World War considerably delayed the use of Magnetophon recording, that is to say, magnetic tape recording. Short supplies of tape held off the breakthrough until the 1950s, when lacquer discs were taken out of service after having been used for nearly 20 years. The portable tape recorder introduced at that time used magnetic tape. This method of recording, which remained in use until the arrival of digital technology, had great advantages. It was a simple matter to edit the recorded material. This generated more studio work, in which the technician, through expanded editing duties, often played a greater part in the creation of programmes than before. Reports could be

reworked and given a more artistic and expressive form, not to mention such already well-established programme formats as radio theatre and features. Over time, the introduction of portable tape recorders in the 1950s brought about an appreciable change. Programme makers no longer needed the assistance of technicians for interviews held elsewhere than at Kungsgatan 8, with the exception the recording cars and the actual studio work.

At this point in time Radiotjänst was cut free from Telegrafverket in the wake of deep conflicts and the tangle that had arisen concerning equipment. A clear divide was now drawn between production technology and programme distribution. One cannot, however, disavow the significant role played by Telegrafverket in the development of production technology, especially during the first two decades. It was telegraph technicians who were responsible for creating the gramophone table and control board, and who refined the production technology. The requirement that technicians must come from Telegrafverket began to be relaxed in the 1930s in pace with improved recording possibilities and greater artistic and expressive demands, which resulted in Radiotjänst beginning to hire and train its own technicians. This trend gained momentum when Head of Technology Erik Mattsson, having built up a strong position within Radiotjänst, chose to leave Telegrafverket.

The first thirty years of radio saw an unbroken advance of production technology coupled with a desire among programme makers to put the various technical innovations to use in the creative operations. Radiotjänst came of age, one could say, around 1950, at which time it experienced a golden age with live entertainment programmes that made Sweden come to a standstill. There was still only one single channel to listen to. The family show *Carousel* (Karusellen), which started in 1951, emptied the cinemas of their audiences. Master of Ceremonies Lennart Hyland and his staff made use of the medium's power and boundlessness in various pranks – such as everyone trading ties – that gathered huge flocks of listeners in different parts of Sweden. One time, a few years later, they promoted the idea that housewives should get a Sunday off, a wife-free day when the husband would take over the household chores. The newspapers joined in and published a series of recipes for the benefit of bewildered house-husbands. Another means of communication, the Swedish State Railways, also jumped on the bandwagon by offering the housewives cheap train tickets on that day.

In 1955 Radiotjänst received its long-awaited second channel. In the face of competition from a popular pirate radio channel, Radio Nord, preparations began in the early 1960s to expand operations to include a third channel. At the same time, listening behaviour was greatly changed by portable transistor radios. Wherever you went, you could listen to the radio.

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Chapter 4

From Wire to Satellite

The affordances of distribution technologies for broadcasting

Nina Wormbs

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe and analyse how changes in distribution technologies and their institutions for broadcasting in Sweden interacted with organizational structures, economy and politics to form a national but still internationally influenced and dependent system. The underlying basis for the issue of distribution is the use of radio technology, or wireless as it was termed originally in the early twentieth century, and the limits and possibilities of that technology; its affordance. I will, in other words, use the radio spectrum as a lens through which the evolving Swedish distribution network can be understood and discussed. The default for radio emissions is their spread, regardless of man-made borders around nations or regions, contrary to wired systems for telegraphy or telephony. As a consequence, international agreements were and still are central institutions for broadcasting but with greater importance during certain periods than others.

I want to show how national infrastructural systems interplay with international agreements, illustrating how the broadcasting system is always nationally embedded, despite its cosmopolitan nature. This national embeddedness relied heavily on the overarching public service ideology which promoted certain values and aims. Among them was the drive to cover the entire nation with transmissions, disregarding the fact that urban areas render higher licence income per transmitter, strongly connected to a non-commercial ideology. Another aim was uninterrupted service leading eventually to redundant solutions with high reliability. A final example was the relation between the different organizations involved in Swedish broadcasting characterized at the same time by familiarity and formality. The monopoly allowed for certain solutions, not seldom simpler than those liberalized situations could afford, where regulation of responsibility needs to be much more detailed.

The growth of the Swedish network was grounded on international cooperation, but also found other ways when growth was not possible on classic

wireless. Two examples will be used to make this point; wired radio in the post-war period and satellite broadcasting in the 1980s and onwards. The case of wired radio is not particularly well known but lends itself to comparison with ongoing and parallel discussion on wired and wireless and the use and regulation of existing infrastructures. The case of wired radio starts in the early 1930s but does not take off until after the war. The last station was closed in the 1970s, a development which is also connected to the introduction of both television and FM radio. The debate on wired radio is also interesting since it reveals how actors used appropriate technology not just to achieve certain material goals but also rhetorically, imbuing certain values and futures in the technology as such. Satellite broadcasting also illustrates how existing infrastructure is always important for the establishment of new technology, but also how big technology with a heavy reliance on state involvement needs to find politically feasible ways to get support. The first discussions on satellite television started in the 1960s but it was not firmly on the Swedish agenda until the mid-1970s, and it took more than a decade before it was a reality.

Together these two examples will show how the Swedish broadcasting system had what has been called a national technological style, while at the same time being heavily dependent on international development and regulation. Moreover, I will make plausible how these technologies also co-produced a certain kind of communication given their affordances. Not only were technological choices socially and culturally embedded but they also had consequences which were heavily connected to what it was possible to do with them (Hutchby 2001). The analyses in this chapter are primarily based on archival material from the Swedish Broadcasting Corporation, the Swedish Telecom Authority, the Swedish Space Corporation and Space Board, and documents from the government offices, all in Stockholm, together with material from the International Broadcasting Union at the EBU in Geneva (Wormbs 1997, 2003, 2011).

Establishing the distribution network

As discussed in chapter 2, the establishment of the Swedish broadcasting monopoly resulted in a solution in which the state, through the Swedish Telegraph Agency (Telegrafverket) owned the distribution infrastructure and content was produced by a private company, Radiotjänst (Broadcasting service), all financed by radio licences (Hadenius 1998). This three-headed organizational model remains in practice today, even though the companies producing content are now owned by a state-owned trust. The financial model has been challenged a number of times, but is as yet (2013) still the same as in 1925. For the arguments in this paper, the ownership of the distribution infrastructure is of essential importance as different state bodies were constantly involved in

making decisions on technology. As we will see, the state cannot be viewed as a monolith, but rather the opposite, a hydra of differing views and ideas on what constituted a best solution, not always acknowledging that their problem definitions diverged fundamentally. Therefore it is important to point out immediately that the Telegraph Agency (Telegrafverket and from 1953 Televerket), had a central role as responsible for the infrastructure of broadcasting. It also collected the licence fee until the late 1980s.

When Swedish national broadcasting was launched in 1925, there were three main transmitters placed in the three largest cities; Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö. In February 1925, a transmitter in Sundsvall in northern Sweden was brought into use. They all worked on medium wave with wavelengths between 270 and 545 metres. During 1925, two more stations were put on line in Östersund and Boden respectively. The Boden station in the far north operated on long wave since it used the antenna system already in place for the military facility located there (Heimbürger 1974). The reason for placing a transmitter there was to use already existing radio infrastructure and something that was probably facilitated by the organizational system of a monopoly and a state authority.

During 1925, this network was supplemented with a number of smaller stations on low power run by amateurs organized in radio clubs. Agreements were made between Telegrafverket, and the radio clubs in which the clubs received a share of the licence fee in the coverage area of the station and could supplement their revenues with those from local commercials. The radio clubs could also contribute content to the national broadcasting, but it was of limited scope (Rahbek 2001). The private stations were of great importance, however, for covering the country with radio. During 1926, 28 per cent of radio listeners received their signal from a private station, a figure that subsequently shrunk as the state-owned network grew (SOU 1935, Wormbs 1997). Bit by bit the private stations were incorporated into the state network, often with technological arguments such as the need for greater transmitter stability. This mirrored the *modus operandi* of Telegrafverket when the Swedish *de facto* monopoly on telephony was established (Kaijser 1994, Wormbs 1997).

A great leap in the establishment of a nation-wide infrastructure for broadcasting in Sweden was the building of the great long-wave transmitter in Motala, in the residential centre of gravity of the country. The reasons for choosing Motala among other places were not only the fact that transmissions would cover large residential areas but also included arguments pertaining to power supply, connection to the studio in Stockholm for transmission of content through wire, and the future expansion of the system. Regarding coverage, a position further north would also have been feasible. However, placing it southwards would be a more optimal solution together with a new station placed in the northern part. The arguments of power and content supply both

illustrate how this technological system was incorporated into existing systems, like the electricity grid and the backbone of the telephone network, the latter run by Telegrafverket. When the station was put into operation in 1927 it was estimated that a third of the population was covered with transmissions (Heimbürger 1974, Wormbs 1997).

Sociotechnical systems like that of broadcasting tend to grow in phases involving different obstacles to growth (Hughes 1983, Kaijser 1994). The term ‘sociotechnical’ signals that the system itself and its growth is not solely dependent on technology but that other factors also play a role and that technology is always deeply embedded in a societal context. At this point in the growth of the distribution of broadcasting it was hampered by the possibility of getting more frequencies for distribution. This in turn had to do with the character of radio waves and the way in which international cooperation in the area was organized.

Radio frequencies: a scarce resource

Radio waves know by default no national borders, a fact that early on contributed to the popularization of the medium since inhabitants of Sweden, for example, could listen to broadcasts from Britain or continental Europe. As the service grew in importance, however, the electromagnetic spectrum grew more and more crowded to the point at which the term ‘chaos’ was used to describe the situation. Initiatives were taken rather early on to form an organization that could work toward furthering broadcasting in Europe and in 1925 the International Broadcasting Union was formed, with its headquarters in Geneva (Briggs 1961, Wormbs 2011). The choice of host city was not a coincidence; the ambitions to serve as an exemplar internationally – also visible in the name itself – were clear. There were many issues on the agenda, such as copyright or quality of transmissions, but one of the most important and pressing was that of frequency allocations (Wormbs 2011).

The electromagnetic spectrum, of which a part is used for radio communication, is an invisible natural resource. How to use this resource in an optimal way is a question of continuous concern and interest (Levin 1971). Ideas on pricing were introduced by Coase in the late 1950s (1959) and have gained momentum the last few decades. However, in the 1920s access to frequencies in Europe was granted through frequency allocations organized into frequency plans. The first one for broadcasting in Europe was the so-called Geneva plan through which frequencies in the medium wave band were distributed among nations. The International Broadcasting Union (IBU) hosted several engineering conferences in 1925 during which the principles of how to distribute this scarce resource were decided. In the medium wave band the number of available

frequencies depends partly on how large the band is made and how broad the channels are made, two things that have changed over time. In 1925, the number was just below a hundred, of which about a dozen were shared by several stations and therefore called common frequencies, and the rest were exclusive for a single station. Eventually area, population and economic development formed the basis for the allocation of the available frequencies. The resulting plan gave Sweden five exclusive frequencies (Wormbs 2011).

Table 1. Caption: Exclusive wavelengths per country in the Geneva plan.

Albania	1	Italy	5
Austria	2	Latvia	1
Belgium	2	Lithuania	1
Bulgaria	1	Luxemburg	1
Czechoslovakia	3	Norway	3
Denmark	1	Poland	4
Estonia	1	Portugal	1
Finland	2	Rumania	2
France	9	Russia (west)	5
Germany	12	Spain	5
Great Britain	9	Sweden	5
Greece	1	Switzerland	1
Holland	2	Turkey (European)	1
Hungary	1	Yugoslavia	1
Ireland	1		

It is striking that the formula with which frequencies were allocated did not take into account the number of languages in use. Multi-lingual countries like Switzerland or Yugoslavia did not get more frequencies on those grounds, even though it was discussed during the deliberations. However, it is also notable that countries that did not yet have national broadcasting services were allocated frequencies for future use. This can be interpreted as a way of ensuring some sustainability in the plan, since these countries were also expected to begin their own services eventually.

I have argued elsewhere (Wormbs 2011 and forthcoming) that the frequency allocation plans for Europe in the interwar period, starting with the Geneva plan, were successful examples of managing a common resource. The radio spectrum is easily accessible and the use of it affects the use of others, two general features of a commons. Contrary to the idea that commons are tragedies, necessarily resulting in depletion through over use (Hardin 1968), Ellinor Ostrom has shown (1990) that if institutions are created which meet certain design principles, the management of the common resource results in sustainable maintenance. The frequency spectrum is a peculiar resource, since it is instantly renewable. Immediately transmission is stopped, the resource is

pristine. However, during use, it displays the features of a common resource. Thus, all those using it must agree on the institutions for usage.

An important part of a sustainable system is that the rules and regulations agreed upon are actually followed through. Surveillance of adherence to agreed rules and regulations is an important part of the system as a whole. For the frequency system of broadcasters in Europe the establishment of a Technical Committee and later a Technical Centre was important as a monitoring institution, focusing on transmitter stability and adherence to other technical issues agreed upon in the plan, such as output power. The Technical Centre also monitored disturbing interference and was therefore also a way of evaluating the functionality of the established agreements (Fickers 2008).

Continuous revisions of plans

Despite the good intentions of the Geneva plan, it had to be revised rather soon. The reason had partly to do with the increased popularity of the service of broadcasting, leading to crowding and scarcity and partly how international radio was regulated. In 1927, an International Radiotelegraph Conference was convened in Washington, the first one since 1912. Since then not only had the world map been changed due to a world war but technological change in the radio sector had been rapid. Broadcasting had not been on the agenda in 1912 and this and other new services had to be made room for in the spectrum. For European broadcasting among the more important changes was that the medium wave band was decreased from what had been the understanding underlying the Geneva plan. From being 200-600 metres it was limited to 200-545 metres (corresponding to frequencies of 550-1500 kHz, rather than 500-1500 kHz). It was also decided that regional frequency plans could be carried out, in line with the procedure already put in place in Europe (Coddington 1952, Tomlinson [1945] 1979).

Following the Washington convention the International Broadcasting Union gathered in Brussels in 1928 to form a new plan, which did not much deviate from the one forged in Geneva. The important change was the inclusion of long waves in the plan. Long waves were attractive as their reach was longer. The Swedish Motala station already transmitted on long wave, and with the Brussels plan, that transmission was acknowledged. Only the next year, however, more or less the same community gathered again to draw up yet another plan. The reason was institutional. The International Broadcasting Union was an organization of broadcasters. However, at the Washington Conference, the issue had been referred to national postal and telecommunication authorities. Subsequently a new regional conference was called for this reason. The resulting plan, the Prague plan, did not in any substantial way deviate from the one

agreed upon in Brussels. In 1933, yet another new plan was drawn up. The number of registered broadcasting stations was now greater than 250, more than double the number in 1926. This plan, the Lucerne plan, was the one in place through the Second World War. Another plan drawn up in Montreux in 1938 was never ratified.

Broadcasting in Europe became a national endeavour rather early and frequencies were distributed accordingly along the particular schemes described above due to scarcity. However, Spohrer has argued that scarcity in the frequencies was used as an argument to maintain national broadcasting, which was challenged by the commercial station established in Luxembourg and for which international broadcasting was the ultimate goal. Radio Luxembourg was continuously challenged on grounds of frequency scarcity and agreed-upon limitations of power as well as the commercials, which naturally had international reach, breaking laws on radio advertising (Spohrer 2008). It is clear that nationalization of broadcasting resulted in a particular use of the spectrum which is not in any way intrinsic to the resource itself. It can easily afford international organization. This can also be illustrated by how mobile telephony is today if not seamless then at least overlapping where services are no longer only national (even though subscriptions are often bounded to the nation state). However, the institutionalization of spectrum use served particular purposes. As we shall see below, spectrum scarcity could also be used as an argument for other technologies.

Wired radio as a solution to spectrum scarcity

Despite these international efforts continuously trying to improve reception, large parts of an extensive and sparsely populated country like Sweden did not have sufficient reception quality, according to Telegrafverket. When wireless was limited, alternatives had to be tried out. One, which had been tried internationally in countries like Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Belgium for example, was wired radio (Heimbürger 1974).

This might seem an odd choice but the idea of broadcasting on the telephone network was actually older than broadcasting itself. Early on in the history of telephony, concerts were distributed to subscribers of a telephone (Balbi 2010). The idea of wired radio was hence just a way of solving a problem and at the same time making use of an already existing infrastructural system. In Sweden, this infrastructure was especially suitable since it was so widely developed. Already in the late nineteenth century Stockholm was the city in the world with most telephone subscriptions and the expansion of the infrastructure grew from there (Garnert 2005, Helgesson 1999, Kaijser 1994). Here was an infrastructural resource that also afforded other forms of communication, especially

since listening to radio at this point was a stationary occupation. However, it is also very plausible that Telegrafverket hoped that radio would stimulate the telephone as a system. The number of radio subscribers was higher than those with a telephone. This is an example of where the institutional organization of the broadcasting system most likely affected technological choice. The aim to promote both telephony and broadcasting coincided with the internal aims of Telegrafverket. It is also noteworthy that wired radio did not afford international reception, which became part of the public debate later, but was not something that Telegrafverket regarded as central, illustrating again how the national service was its prime concern.

The radio transmission was done on a high frequency whereas the telephone transmission was on a low frequency. The two signals were separated in the house and allowed for talking on the telephone and having the radio on at the same time. The establishment of the network commenced before the war, but did not really take off until afterwards. Areas in which disturbances were more severe than others, due to the railway for example, were prioritized. The reason for disturbances was primarily due to the fact that electrical equipment was badly shielded and that amplitude modulated (AM) radio was susceptible to interference. At this time, another form of modulation was emerging, namely frequency modulation (FM), which was less susceptible to disturbances. FM transmissions were also expected to take place on shorter waves with more limited reach, which would affect the frequency planning. The assigned bands allowed for more stations and transmitter reach was more limited. An FM transmitter on very high frequency does not reach as far as an AM transmitter on long wave.

The official radio inquiry of 1943 suggested that wired radio should be utilized as broadcasting technology. However, synchronous transmission and above all, FM were also discussed. Both wired radio and FM would allow for several programmes to be transmitted, whereas the existing AM network only allowed for one programme, which did not reach everyone. The issue of more programmes, or double programmes as it was called, became more pressing and part of the overall discussion. It was also entangled in a conflict between Telegrafverket and Radiotjänst (Broadcasting service) on where the line of expertise and responsibility should be drawn as far as production technology was concerned (Elgemyr 1997) (See further Chapter 3 in this volume.)

Discussions on which technology was preferable emerged and arguments were often aligned with vested interests in either solution. An FM solution would mean that listeners had to buy new radio sets since the transmissions would be on higher frequencies. This was partly why FM would be a good solution since scarcity was not yet pressing in the VHF bands. Proponents of FM, such as the radio industry, stressed, however, that people in general bought a new set every twelve years; hence renewal of receivers happened anyway. Moreover

the habit of having more than one set was spreading. Telegrafverket would argue along lines of efficiency and cost. However, the issue of cost was under debate. It seemed to depend on who was doing the calculations. Finally, what one might call the essences of the technologies were brought up as arguments. The Broadcasting company was against wired radio and put forward arguments stating that wired radio was a monopoly solution, going against the fundamental idea of radio as being free (Wormbs 1997). Moreover, FM was the new and thereby modern technology and not the old and dated one. This line of argument is something one can easily recognize from discussions on the digitalization of the terrestrial network for television in the 1990s where modernization and digitalization were treated as synonyms (Englund & Wormbs 2007).

Establishment of the wired radio network was slow initially, but in the mid-1950s the number of subscribers reached 150,000. The conflict between FM and wired radio persisted with the establishment of FM in urban areas and wired radio in the provinces, which was the cheapest solution for the state. However, FM transmissions turned out to compete with wired radio, for partly unexpected reasons. The question of double programming was parallel to that of television, which surfaced as a media issue after the war. Both were of course dependent on international frequency agreements for television and FM radio. This issue was also prolonged and discussions were deliberate, but in the mid-1950s television transmissions eventually started. Contrary to the belief of some, the interest among the public was great and television sets were bought and licence fees paid at a much higher rate than expected. As a consequence the network for television was expanded and covered 96 per cent of households after ten years. As television transmitters worked on similar frequencies as the FM transmitters, the infrastructure in terms of masts could be used for both television and FM and subsequently the FM network could also be expanded at a lower cost than initially calculated. The need for wired radio diminished accordingly.

The example of wired radio shows the contingency of technological change and how investments in a certain technology, in this case infrastructural systems like telephone wires and radio masts, can be useful for another technology. Wired radio was partly chosen as a solution to the problem of covering the country because it did not make use of the scarce resource which was frequencies, and partly because it could use the telephone wires. However, it also met its nemesis twenty years later because its competitor, FM radio, on frequencies now available, could use television masts for its growth. In both instances the choices on technology were deeply national and rooted in the institutional organization, but at the same time connected to ongoing international technological change and organization. Sweden was not an island; the establishment of both television and FM radio were connected to international standardization and frequency planning. However, the specific connections between these dif-

ferent subsystems were made possible to a high degree by the organization of the distribution system with a central state authority presiding over regulation, frequency planning and running of the network.

Nordic cultural exchange with a technological fix

In the previous sections, the efforts to establish and expand the original distribution net for broadcasting were discussed and analysed. The underlying reason was the ambition to build a national network that would reach everybody, since broadcasting was considered a national service. The following example had other original driving forces and was moreover carried through in a period of institutional change, both in Sweden and internationally, when the hegemony of state authorities in the telecommunications sector was broken as a result of liberalization. This had major consequences in this sector too, as it meant that established power relations were renegotiated and the struggle for defining the discourse on technology development was unsettled. Moreover, the technology was not tried out and mature and therefore was subject to interpretive flexibility (Bijker, Hughes & Pinch 1987).

Important background to understanding the forthcoming case is the discourse on the cultural proximity of the Scandinavian and Nordic states, peoples and languages. The Scandinavian countries are normally defined as Norway, Sweden and Denmark and to the group of Nordic countries we count also Iceland and Finland as well as autonomous areas belonging to these nation states, such as the Faroe Islands. The construction of a Nordic identity is a not only a cultural, political and social process (Stråth & Sørensen 1997) but also a technological one (Kaijser & Hedin 1995) and deeply interrelated with the fact that these regions, countries and eventually nation states have been organized under the same monarchies for centuries. A wave of so-called Nordism was especially salient in the late nineteenth century. Central to this case is the institutional frame put in place in the 1950s with the Nordic Council and its committees and Council of Ministers (Sundelius & Wiklund 2000).

The Nordic Council had discussed radio and television cooperation several times since its inception in the 1950s. Since 1959, there has also been an organized exchange and cooperation around programmes called Nordvisionen, mirroring the Eurovision put in place a few years earlier. In 1974, the report *TV across Borders* followed in the line of these discussions, and was the result of an inquiry in the Nordic Council. In short the argument was that the Nordic citizens could not view each other's television and it would be better if they could. Four routes to an increased exchange were presented: direct reception by existing transmitters; transmission of neighbouring programmes in national distribution networks; a separate channel for Nordvisionen; and transmissions

via cable television (Wormbs 2003). Here it should be pointed out that the offer of public service radio and television in the Nordic countries at this time was meagre compared with the situation just twenty years later. Sweden and Finland both had two television channels and Norway, Denmark and Iceland only had one each.

The solutions to transmitting the television programmes were all fairly well established, with the exception of cable television which was not particularly well known and tried, compared with how it had been used in the US context, for example. The report also mentioned that direct broadcasting satellites could be a way in the future – and next to cable the only way – to cover the entire area. However, the technology would not be available until the 1980s; no direct broadcasting satellites existed at the time. The report was circulated for consideration, as is the custom, and the Swedish Space Company argued instead that the technology was well advanced, ‘established and trustworthy’, and that there were ‘no technical barriers to direct broadcasting satellites’. Moreover, it was said that a satellite solution could serve other Nordic needs, like communication with oil platforms or other remote areas. This information led the Nordic Council of Ministers to commission the Swedish Space Company to investigate a Nordic satellite system for broadcasting (Wormbs 2003).

The struggle to define technology

The fact that the issue of transmitting Nordic broadcasting was investigated by the Swedish Space Company (SSC) and not by the Nordic telephone authorities – which had a long-standing cooperation – created a stir to say the least. As pointed out in the previous section, the state authorities in the telecom sector were central to the broadcasting system and also those with the necessary connections to the international agreements and meeting places, such as the International Telecommunications Union, under which for example the issue of frequencies was determined. It was on precisely that issue that the first conflict arose. After having met with the group that coordinated the Nordic agenda in ITU in this regard, the SSC realized that international frequency agreements were important and that the upcoming World Administrative Radio Conference in 1977 was central to a Nordic satellite system. That was when the issue of slots in the valuable geostationary orbit around the globe was to be negotiated and the SSC and the telecommunications authorities had to cooperate. The outcome was eventually rather successful in that a number of national as well as transnational slots were given to the Nordic countries at 5 degrees East of Greenwich, which is just above Europe. These slots were an extremely important infrastructure for the following work since they allowed a place for Nordic satellites (Wormbs 2003).

The SSC report, published in 1977, suggested either a total exchange of all existing channels or the distribution of an edited common Nordic channel. The choices had consequences for how large the satellite should be and what launcher could be used to put it into orbit. Apart from the satellite and a launcher, a control station was also needed, as well as private receivers and an uplink. The most conspicuous part of the receiver in the home was the parabolic antenna which was about 1 metre in diameter. If you were living in an apartment block you would not need your own, however, but rely on a common one. The cost of the entire system was estimated to about 575 million SEK for the heavier solution with a total exchange, not counting the costs for the viewers. And based on information from suppliers in both Europe and the USA, a system was expected to be in place by four or five years hence.

The report was heavily criticized on several grounds; technological, economical and institutional. Televerket stated that any further investigation should be carried out by those who had been assigned responsibility, clearly trying to take back the issue from the new actor SSC. Televerket also rejected the calculations on the transmission of radio waves through space, which led to a different conclusion when it came to the number of satellites needed, which in turn affected the cost. In their opinion, the SSC had underestimated the damping of waves, the cost of technology and the time within which a system could be put in place. Just like the SSC, Televerket supported its assertions with international expertise, albeit other international expertise. The controversy was a clear-cut example of a struggle for power to formulate the problem (Callon 1986).

SSC, created in 1972, was on the frontier of technological development, had a 'can-do' attitude and worked on a small scale directly with its users among a limited number of scientists and industrial subcontractors. Televerket on the other hand, was one of the largest state authorities, created in 1853, and responsible for keeping telecommunications and broadcasting to millions of households uninterrupted and reliable. Even though the engineers working in these two organizations had the same basic training at the Royal Institute of Technology, their framing of the problems in this particular technological field differed, since the tasks of the organizations differed. Televerket managed to regain the initiative and was charged with the task of making yet another inquiry (Wormbs 2003).

Critique and support of direct broadcasting satellites in the public sphere

The public discussion on Nordic satellite broadcasting began rather early in the process. Already in 1975 an opinion piece in the largest Swedish daily,

Dagens Nyheter, argued that it was a romantic idea that Swedes would want to see Nordic and Danish programmes. During the following year a plethora of arguments were presented and in 1977 it was the biggest media issue discussed in the press in the Nordic countries (Lund & Aarup-Kristensen 1978). The discussion was rather diverse and tended to shift between the more general issues connected to television broadly speaking and the more specific issues that had to do with a Nordic broadcasting satellite. Resistance was great in all countries, however. As the debate went on, other new media were also drawn into the debate, such as cable television and video (particularly video violence, see Højdestrand 1997), sometimes bundled up under the heading of electronic media.

The political divide in the press was at times distinct, with the left outspokenly negative, the social democratic sceptical, the liberal or conservative rural very positive and the urban press rather balanced. However, there were also neutral pieces and places where both sides would meet in dialogue (Lund & Aarup-Kristensen 1978). The Nordic broadcasting satellite was called 'a multi-billion project ordered by Saab-Scania and LM [Ericsson] pushing a Grand Swedish dream of an American show in seven channels onto our neighbors'. From this perspective, the satellite was seen as an industrial project all about money and power, cynically driven by certain groups with particular influence. Issues of cultural imperialism (read: more US programmes), damaging media use and commercialization were brought into the argument as grand meta-narratives against the background of which the Nordic satellite project could be judged, all part of a very time-dependent discourse prevalent during the 1970s. Parallel narratives of progress were abundant as an argument pro. Central to the arguments of the proponents were ideas on the importance of heavy investment in technological development for the development of a society, and also how those investments needed to be in pace with international efforts. If not, Sweden risked lagging behind in a race

Striking in the media debate on the satellite system was that the original intention with the satellite – that it would contribute to fulfil certain cultural goals pertaining to strengthening Nordic identity – was rejected by those who would, in another context, probably have supported that same intention. The means – satellite technology – of reaching the Nordic cultural goal was also enabling other goals, which were undesirable or unintended. The affordances of the satellite were manifold according to these actors, satellite technology, contrary to existing technology I would argue, opened the possibility of quantitative change – for example, more television also meant more American television, which in turn carried with it a host of fears stemming from the lack of control. Technology out of control is a long-standing theme in dystopic discourse (Winner 1977), and taking control of technology is a forceful argument both for those who want to prohibit technology and for those who want to enable it,

even though the type of control needed is very different. In parallel, however, especially proponents of the satellite could also argue along the lines of not being in control, but having to follow suit, not risking lagging behind others (as mentioned above), or even lagging behind history itself (cf Wormbs 2007).

Reformulating the original problem from culture to industry

Already in the original circulation for consideration of the report *TV across Borders* the Space Company had suggested that this issue was actually of great industrial importance. When Televerket was asked to carry out the second investigation on Nordsat, the Space Company realized that the first round had been lost and changed its tactic accordingly. It turned to its own ministry, the Ministry of Industry, created in the late 1960s as part of what was called an active industrial policy on behalf of the social democracy (Weinberger 1997). However, in the first half of the 1970s, and especially following the oil crisis, Swedish industry faced severe problems and action was geared towards safety and rescue rather than actively building and developing. Crises were evident within shipbuilding, the textile industry, forestry, and the steel industry. Moreover the question of the Swedish air force and the national aircraft industry was in a state of limbo awaiting decision on the next plane.

In 1976, forty years of social democratic rule was replaced by a coalition of the liberal, the conservative and the centre parties who were not only inexperienced in ruling the country but also disagreed on central issues, perhaps most importantly, as it were, the question of nuclear power. The Swedish Space Company managed to use this and offered space as an area for the new government to show technological prowess. Not only were space activities and space technology untainted in Sweden – in comparison with other high-tech areas such as nuclear power or aircraft – but it could also serve several goals at the same time. It was high profile, it would support central lines of industry – such as aviation (Saab), telecom (Ericsson) and propulsion (Volvo) – and it could be linked to regional policy in that the north of Sweden could be engaged as the control station would be placed in Kiruna above the Arctic Circle. Kiruna was at this point under stress due to cutbacks in the ore and steel industry but already housed space activities since the late 1950s with the Geophysical Observatory and later the rocket and balloon launching site Esrange, originally part of the European Space Agency (Sörlin & Wormbs 2010).

The Space bill of 1979 in fact relied heavily on a report from the SSC to the ministry. Not only did the report spell out all the reasons for investing, but it also made international comparison, a classic way of arguing for central resources. With the Space bill, Swedish space activities grew substantially. By way of stra-

tegic manoeuvring, the SSC had made itself independent of the Nordic Council and Nordic cultural policy in general. A cultural project was transformed into one of industrial and regional policy. However, once decided, it was possible to bring it forward as a solution to the original cultural issues, even though the satellite was far from defined and its interpretive flexibility was immense. Remember, at this point there were still no direct broadcasting satellites in operation. During the 1980s these parallel processes were complicated even further by the industrial interest of the other Nordic countries (Wormbs 2003).

Parallel processes and technology development

The decision to develop and build the telecommunications satellite Tele-X was a Swedish decision but eventually Norway also participated as did Finland. Organizationally it was a complex project, not only because of its transnational nature, but also due to ongoing conflicts on who had expertise in the area of satellite technology. Was it the space engineers or the telecommunication engineers? The Ministry of Industry housed the SSC and the Swedish Space Board, but naturally also needed to pay attention to Televerket, which belonged to the Ministry of Communication. The conflict that arose in the mid-1970s lingered and was at times so acute that people left the project because of it.

It was also technically complex for reasons that are hard to single out. Partly these technical problems were actually very political as the view on what was useful and usable technology was not neutral or given. The SSC would judge a certain bandwidth sufficient, whereas the telecom authorities would disagree. The SSC would have a different take on what could be considered redundancy than the telecom authorities, and so on. And when it came to the television service, the possibility of actually being able to serve as the first satellite for Nordic broadcasting affected the set up of the technology. However, as the industrial project continued, the future user had to be co-constructed and hence the ongoing cultural policy discussion within the Nordic Council was central. This was not an uncommon situation in space development at this time. Remote sensing had the same problem of finding users (Mack 1990). In the case of Nordic television it was complicated even further by the fact that there was no agreement, still, on the merits of a satellite solution. Eventually the Nordic Council decided not to have satellite television, which was about a year before the satellite would be launched (Wormbs 2003).

The entire project was delayed due to some of these conflicts but also because the launcher Ariane had troubles and the Challenger space shuttle exploded just a few minutes after take off in April 1986, with global repercussions that severely affected the entire Western space sector. In parallel to this halting within the space sector, the development of cable television was rapid

in Sweden. A public inquiry suggested in 1984 that cable television should be allowed for a trial period, which was then made permanent (SOU 1984). Into these networks it was possible to feed signals from satellites with lower power than the ones envisioned for direct broadcasting to homes, since the central receivers could be made bigger. In fact, this had been standard operation for a long time. Television had been relayed via communication satellites, received by large earth stations (typically 30 metres in diameter) and then fed into the terrestrial net of transmitting stations. However, with cable networks and new regulations, the possibility for more channels and direct distribution in networks opened up. European media entrepreneurs realized this opportunity and before long the traditional terrestrial system was complemented with cable, and soon also direct broadcasting satellites (Ewertsson 2001). Television was really across borders.

The satellite was launched in 1989 and was used for both Swedish and Nordic television, but not as originally intended. On the other hand, fifteen years had passed and the general media landscape was different. The broadcast monopoly was broken and the infrastructure, even that owned by state companies as was soon to be the case, was used by both commercial and public service broadcasting. The part of Televerket that took care of the terrestrial net was not hostile to satellites, which in turn affected the over-all technology mix.

Conclusion

The aim of this article has been to show that the development of the Swedish distribution system for broadcasting was nationally situated but at the same time connected to international technological development and institutional organization. A central question has been how technology has been connected to the over-arching aim of communication in what is often seen as the process of mutual shaping of technology and society. Have there been technological solutions in the Swedish case which have had effects on the functionality of the overall system, on the possibilities for and ways of communication? I would argue that there have. The ideology of covering the entire nation was a primary one and put focus on expanding the distribution net for the single national programme. It would have been technologically feasible to have had a regional system. However one nation, one programme was the political will and the technology – in this case AM on long and medium wave – could not afford both coverage and several programmes. With the advent of wired radio, the situation was rather the opposite. Radio technology allowed for efficient coverage – one single transmitter reaching many, but expanding a wired system, even when it used an existing infrastructure, took time. On the other hand, it could have been used for multiple programmes. It was even suited to

broadcasting several programmes. However, that affordance was not carried through, partly for contingent reasons. Wired radio was in hindsight both too late and too early. Had it been established more quickly and more broadly, it might have enabled a different infrastructure for communication.

In the case of satellite technology the same kind of temporal contingency is apparent. When the satellite was finally launched it was both too late and too early. The original idea of promoting public service broadcasting in the Nordic region was halted in the process by the multitude of possibilities that the technology afforded. Satellite distribution could have been used to promote a specific broadcasting system, in this case public service, but again, the national service was in the foreground. When the satellite was launched, it was just part of a large heterogeneous fleet where commercial solutions were abundant.

Sweden has institutional features that underlie the set-up of the broadcasting system, as illustrated, for example, by the role of the Telegraph Agency. This has changed over time as struggles over the power of technology have shown. The status of the Telegrafverket was challenged on several occasions but the fundamental restructuring did not happen until the 1990s. The emerging liberalization in the 1980s was certainly part of that procedure and led indirectly to different choices in technological set-up as older power relations were renegotiated. One might also remember that Sweden moreover has certain geographical features, which differ from those of the Netherlands, for example.

The aim has also been to show that decisions on technological solutions are, not surprisingly, ideological. In the case of the satellite this becomes clear as engineers with the same training came to diverging conclusions on a technological solution as a result of their different organizational affiliations. This illustrates what can be termed the interpretive flexibility of the technology itself in a phase of development and when the artefact is unstable (Bijker, Hughes & Pinch 1987). However, in this case it can also be interpreted as these engineers doing what Gabrielle Hecht (1998) has called technopolitics, that is, trying to achieve certain political goals by means of certain technologies. In the satellite case, the SSC was doing precisely that when it convinced the government to invest heavily in space activities in Sweden.

Finally, the cases show how different groups, whether engineers, Nordic politicians or journalists, rhetorically appropriated technology to their own ends. The way in which a certain technology is talked about affects its use and dissemination, I would argue, since our perception of a thing precedes the use of that thing in most cases. This is also true for political decisions on technology. Thus, discourse on technology, its use and its affordances, is central for democratic decisions on technology policy in an increasingly technological society.

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Audience Orientation and the Communicative Ethos of Public Broadcasting

Chapter 5

Children's Voices From a Public Service Perspective

Images of childhood in radio and television

Ingegerd Rydin

Introduction

Many countries' broadcasting services lack specific children's departments with responsibility for programming aimed at children and youth – especially rare throughout the history are radio programs directly targeted at children. But Sweden, together with some other countries with broadcasting organizations that have a public service mission, has a tradition of investing in children and youth programmes both on radio and television. One explanation for this is that the public service broadcasting company Sveriges Radio (Swedish Radio) has from the very beginning been closely linked to the foundation of the Swedish welfare state. Investment in children's programming has to be seen in the light of this project and the representations and images of children and childhood must therefore be analysed within such a context.

This chapter takes as its point of departure the public service mission in policy and programming within Sveriges Radio – both radio and television – with the particular aim of focusing on discourses targeting childhood, nationalism, modernity and citizenship. Concretely, these issues are to be studied through the analysis of ideological statements, such as policy documents, as well as studies of programme content, format and genre, examined in particular for how children are addressed in radio and television programming, from the pioneering period in the 1920s up to the present.

The way in which children and childhood are portrayed in both programmes for adults and in children's programmes can tell us about the public images of children and childhood (Hirdman 1989; Aronsson & Sandin 1996). The radio pioneer period happened to coincide with the foundation of the Swedish welfare state and the ideals with which it was formed. The welfare state, if we synthesize the picture somewhat, is a national project aimed at creating a coherent population of healthy and 'good' citizens. Furthermore, as Spigel (1999) proposed, children and childhood are at the centre of the nationalist discourse. Children have a special symbolic dimension for the formation of

what Benedict Anderson called an 'imagined community' (Anderson 1983). Here was the opportunity for different professional groups to have a voice on the proper upbringing of children; for example, how ethics and morals were passed on to children, how matters of taste should be brought up, or whether society should be reflected in children's programmes, such as issues relating to social living conditions, global conflicts etc.

I will primarily rely on the theoretical frameworks from childhood studies (history of childhood and sociology of childhood) with outlooks to international media research.

The childhood sociologists Allison James and Allan Prout (1990) regard the western childhood as a timeless zone, separate from the reality that adults live in. This timelessness is the basis for the concept of childhood as a period of innocence and purity. The concept of time is also central to how we view human life phases. Childhood is temporary and is always in relation to the real purpose of life: to become an adult. In adulthood, however, we look back and reflect on the childhood period, often considered the best period in human life. On the other hand, children have also become a symbol of a forward-looking vision of the future, an icon often used in the media, especially in advertising.

Views of children and childhood are explicitly pronounced in various policy documents of Sveriges Radio, but from an audience perspective these views are also manifest, overtly or covertly, in programming, for example, in the way morals, values and conducts are expressed. When it comes to content, there has always been a discussion about what is suitable to show to children, i.e. what kind of topics can be dealt with, since children by definition are regarded as a group with special needs. Also, the balance of educational and childrearing goals versus entertainment value has affected the repertoire of suitable topics and has fluctuated over time. When it comes to *format and genre*, the producers' professional competence has changed over time and affected the output, which becomes apparent from a historical study of programming. Other contributing factors are the inspiration from successful commercial programme formats which are adapted in order to appeal to the young audience. But format and genre are also chosen in relation to the conceptions of the audience's capacities and needs. Furthermore, economics plays a role in genre and format and hence is related to the company's view of children's status and position. For example, expensive drama productions for children indicate that the child audience is prioritized. Finally, the *mode of addressing* children is to be dealt with as it says something about what kind of relation the broadcaster wants to establish with its audience, for example, whether a more intimate style is to be preferred to a more distant style of addressing the audience, or if there is a symmetrical or asymmetrical relation between audience and programme (eg. presenters/characters).

Method

This chapter is based on a more extensive study covering a range of programmes and documents from the period 1925-1999 (Rydin 2000). For this chapter a number of cases are chosen highlighting some of the paradigm shifts in the perception of childhood and children by looking at how the children's departments have changed or adapted their policies, programme formats and communicative ethos (Scannel 1989, 1996) in line with the *Zeitgeist*.

The main sources used are archived radio and television programmes. Unfortunately only a very small proportion of programmes broadcast in the pioneering period, i.e. between 1925 and 1940, have been preserved. The data for this period has therefore been supplemented by printed sources such as manuscripts, policy documents, debate articles etc. In addition, a systematic review of programme headers was carried out by surveying the content of the magazine *Radiohysnaren* [The Radio Listener] and its successor *Röster i Radio och TV* [Voices in Radio and TV]. The selection of cases paired with other documents related to childhood issues aims to detect when a new discourse is arising, such as a new way of looking at children and childhood.

Still, one should keep in mind that 'a story' is told that has to be seen against the contemporary discourses on childhood as well as the personal interests of the researcher. Even if this study is based on systematically selected empirical material, personal memories from the period also probably affect the story, since I myself have experienced three different childhoods during the period; my own, my children's and my grandchildren's. Furthermore, my own previous research on children's reception of radio and TV within the audience and programme research department at the Swedish broadcasting company contributes to the analysis.

The 'good' childhood and early radio

The introduction of radio is to be seen against the social climate that prevailed during the decades after 1900 and in relation to the social transformations and the ideas about children and family that were the major issues at that time. The twentieth century would be 'the century of the child', the Swedish difference feminist writer Ellen Key¹ wrote in her famous book of the same title, where in a number of essays she gives an idealized picture of the child, the family and marriage. These ideas were not really new, but they struck a strong chord in the period around the turn of the century. Already during the emergence of the capitalist industrial society in the 1800s new approaches to children and childhood began to appear.

The concept of the child as a symbolic future for the nation became central to the Progressive Era discourses on childhood that emerged in the late nineteenth century and flourished in the early decades of the 1900s. Tying Charles Darwin's theories of evolution to a sense of national purpose, the Progressive Era's middle-class 'child-saving' movement saw children as the key to future generations. (Spigel 1995: 34-35).

Ellen Key campaigned for a childhood where all children could go to school, having the opportunity to enjoy both physical and aesthetic education as well as play and recreation, rather than participating in the daily work on the farm or in the kitchen. Ellen Key's ideas were adopted by the bourgeois radicals around the turn of the century. They formed new ideals of childhood and family based on the cohesive nuclear family, where the focus was on the child and its future. It was stressed that children should 'be protected and supplied by their parents. They would be at home or at school, never on the street. Children could play and learn and not [be] working.' Social historians refer to these thoughts and ideas as the 'good childhood' (Sundkvist 1994).

Ellen Key suggested, for example, that children should have access to 'good' children's literature, which was to be found both among Swedish and international writers. Unsurprisingly, children's programmes appeared regularly during the first year of broadcasting. The very first children's programme, which was aired on 4 January 1925, featured well known children's authors, singers and song writers. They were female friends of Ellen Key. Bringing together some of the most renowned representatives of children's culture was obviously of huge symbolic significance. In this, the tone for children's programming was set. These women represented a new kind of children's fairy tale and nursery rhyme. Their view of children's culture was characterized by the contemporary discussion of what might be called the 'good childhood'. The bright and healthy childhood was advocated, where children looked prosperous with fair curly hair and rosy cheeks. In other tales, it was clear that the audience was seen as vulnerable and innocent, needing to be tamed and shaped to become obedient and humble. Children's hygiene was also considered. They should be clean in order to be 'good' children. This was a time when hygiene was on the political agenda in society at large. Sweden was at this time a poor country where tuberculosis was a common and deadly disease. Radio broadcasting was seen as a powerful instrument to spread ideas about hygiene to the people (Thurén 1997), including small children.

Older children were offered readings or dramatizations of children's novels by established writers, such as Louisa Alcott's *Little Women* or, for example, the tales of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn. In the case of *Little Women*, according to literary scholar Barbara Wall (1991), who studied how children were addressed in children's books, the moral message of this book was spoken as

a dialogue between the young women. Through this exchange of speech, the message was forwarded to the reader/listener. This invited the reader/listener to participate in the conversation, to be involved in the thoughts and feelings of the main protagonists in the novel.

The reader/listener becomes a close friend of the March girls, an ally and confidante. Bernard Wishy sees *Little Women* as a precursor to a type of children's narrative that gradually became more common. *Little Women* can be said to have paved the way for girls' books like *Ann of Green Gables* and *The Little House on the Prairie*, both of which have strong-willed yet simultaneously vulnerable girls as protagonists. These are depictions of the loving child but one who can make mistakes, the pure and innocent child who has good intentions that cannot be realized in a corrupt world. The radio dramatization of *Little Women* may be seen as a sign of wishing to give the girls in the audience a story about the young women's path to maturity and independence in an otherwise strongly boy-dominated children's culture. Most plays and readings in the early years were unilaterally devoted to a male audience. The boy as a 'little devil', a rascal, is a stereotype that has been cultivated in children's culture for a long time and had a given place within the early radio, especially the rascal in *Bill* which was broadcast for a long period, based on the *William* stories by Richmal Compton, about a mischievous eleven-year-old English schoolboy and his band of friends, known as 'The Outlaws'.²

The American cartoonist Ketcham, who created series like 'Dennis' claimed: 'Any child, especially a male boy, a male child, preschool, is the same all over the world, regardless of what his culture is.' Ketcham's stress on 'male-ness' is particularly interesting in light of Donna Haraway's analysis of the anthropological sciences, where the 'male' specimen is typically considered to be representative of the entire species (Spigel 1995:59).

The Children's Letterbox

Children being invited into the radio studio as performers became a long-lasting genre over nearly 50 years in Sweden. The programme *The Children's Letterbox* became more or less an institution. In a study of Swedish people's memories of radio and television, this programme stands out from all others (Höijer 1998). One reason was that *The Children's Letterbox* also represents regularity and daily routine (Scannell 1996). For me and many others this programme evokes the smell of pancakes and pea soup, a menu that was common on Thursday nights. The programme was aired on a Thursday, while Swedish mothers were busy cooking or serving the evening meal for their children and husbands. The pancakes added positive connotations to the programme. This was the

time of breadwinner fathers and homemaker mothers and children all sitting around the radio.

This programme was instituted and directed by one of the pioneers of Sveriges Radio, Sven Jerring. He was the company's first host and announcer, and became in time the most popular personality, and eventually 'Uncle Sven' to the entire Swedish population. According to historical documents, this programme started by reading letters written by children. Eventually children were invited to come to the studio for various types of performances such as playing musical instruments, singing songs or reciting poems. The programme was popular not only with children but also with adults. By inviting amateurs to the radio, one tried to reduce the gap between ordinary people and the professionals behind the microphones in the broadcasting studio. Such programmes created aspirations and hopes among the audience to appear on the radio, maybe to become famous in the future (compare the 'star' programmes of today such as the global concept *Idol*). The idea of an 'Uncle' presenting a programme aimed at children was not unique to Sweden. Both the UK and Norway, for example, had their 'Uncles'. But as opposed to the UK, where children were prohibited by law from performing on the radio because it was deemed a kind of child labour, the Swedish programme relied mainly on child performances.

Jerring wanted the unaffected and spontaneous child, a view that was in line with conceptions of childhood at the time, where children would seem to be happy and 'natural', like the fair-haired children who appeared in fairytale illustrations at the time around the turn of the century and beyond. Yet the children were used to entertain others with their childlike charm. One cannot escape the fact that the children's participation aimed to entertain the adults. Children were seen as having an attraction value, which the producers understood they could exploit. Sometimes the performers were far from being full-fledged artists, but rather they were children who were shy, forgot the verses and sang out of tune or used the wrong words, something that was inevitable when the programmes went live to air, and the artists were sometimes very young, even two-year-olds participated.

How should we classify *The Children's Letterbox* in terms of genre? What kind of communicative ethos does this programme have? It is a kind of entertainment programme with interviews and talks, songs, poems etc., but there is no audience in the studio. The audience is out there in the Swedish homes. Very young children up to teenagers participated, entering the studio with their mothers and fathers. Jerring sometimes complained about the parents, who tried to set pressure on their children to perform well. Initially, in 1925, 'Uncle Sven' was a relatively young man of around 30 years. In the 1970s when the last programme was broadcast Uncle Sven was around 75. Such a long-running programme and presenter would be extremely odd in today's media output. Over the years Jerring turned into an icon for radio broadcasting. In principle,

everyone in the older generations of Swedes has some memories from his programmes and especially *The Children's Letterbox*. The generational categories of 'children' and 'adults' looked different during the pioneer period. The paternalistic tone of 'talking down' to children was then a normal tone. Still Uncle Sven had a somewhat laidback manner, not pushing the children in the studio or the child audience in the homes.

Modernity: Enlightenment, technique fascination and nationalism

The initial policy declarations during the pioneer period before World War II declared that children's programmes should be entertaining and not be subordinated to pedagogy. They would provide relaxation and entertainment for children after school. The programmes were not meant to be 'school radio', but they could well have an educational purpose. Drama, fairy tales and readings from books were broadcast on a regular basis. The preferred readings were from classic children's novels, such as *Treasure Island* or *Tom Sawyer*, i.e. well established international and legitimate children's culture. Gradually radio programmes for children gained an intrinsic value as an instrument of popular education. And increasingly programmes were also the target of debates. From the initial unpretentious programmes, gradually a greater awareness of the audience began and with it the view that they should be educated in certain directions. Some programmes were criticised for being too silly and nonsense by a group of women who called themselves the Swedish Women's Union Radio Committee. They did not explicitly say what programmes they preferred, but they referred vaguely to 'sagotanterna' ("the fairy tale reading ladies"), which presumably meant readings of short stories and tales with a clear moral undertone, a genre that was quite common at the time. Programmes for children should be more serious and thoughtful, they claimed. Child psychology was gaining ground in most western cultures during this period of time, so programming was influenced by new psychological and educational trends. These women demanded that the programme activities would have tighter control and a clearer structure. Here was laid the foundation for an independent children's programming unit with clear goals and requirements of age-differentiated programmes and that programmes would be educational and activating. Here, inspiration came from the UK where radio broadcasting had started a few years ahead of Sweden. One of the requests was for programmes that provided the children with civic education, which could be anything from teaching hygiene to pure aesthetic taste. Thus a 'public knowledge' project was preferred, whereas radio for children as a 'popular culture' project was rejected (cf. Corner 2009) by the Swedish Women's Union Radio

Committee, who represented professionals rather than ordinary house wives. These ideas were implemented in radio clubs for creative activities and crafts. The demands can be linked to the so-called Child Study movement. According to Messenger Davies (2010:29) the growth of the Child Study movement and the medical/psychological model of childhood put the focus on children and their individual needs. It was a protectionist model of children and childhood. Children need to be protected and 'educated' and they should be 'literate'. These ideas are also related to the conceptions of children as vulnerable and dependent, a discourse which has popped up from time to time in debates on the effects of media on children.

The 'public knowledge' project also embraced a fascination for technology, which was part of the welfare state and ideas of modernization. Sven Jerring seems to have been fascinated by the potential and development of the new technology for radio broadcasting. He explains with delight, in a programme broadcast from the city of Lund, to the children of a recording bus that takes care of the technology and music. A touching episode is when he demonstrates a magical phone, where a girl from the audience shall say 'one' and the phone responds with a beep, when she says 'two', the phone gives two signals and so on. The whole group of children gathered giggle, thrilled about this technology, and Jerring seems as fascinated as the children. The fascination for technology was a general phenomenon at this time. Interest in new inventions was great. There were, for example, youth programmes that addressed topics such as aircraft and flight, and how to construct an aeroplane. There was a kind of national rhetoric in this new world of technology (Löfgren 1990).

Paternalism was part of the national project of building the welfare state. Therefore, the pioneer period was characterized by a paternalistic attitude towards the audience (Abrahamsson 1999, Thurén 1997). Paternalism comprised, *inter alia*, the public education idea. One wanted to influence the audience in a certain direction, such as appropriate norms and values, culture, good taste and education, as well as educating listeners to appropriate lifestyles. One can also add an orientation to consensus in society. Early radio highlighted common values, avoiding things that could lead to conflicts and cultural fragmentation. Controversial issues were not raised on the radio (Abrahamsson 1999).

These ideas were also reflected in children's programmes. Sven Jerring is a good example of a paternalist and proponent of consensus. It was consistent with these ideas also to assert thoughts on nationalism and Nordic sovereignty. Jerring wanted to serve as the vital link to bring together children from different parts of Sweden and Scandinavia as a whole. The 'letter box' would be a mouthpiece for the entire country and via letters children from north to south could come to talk with each other. The nationalist idea was to link the Swedish provinces closer together. When Jerring went abroad to make programmes, it was primarily to the Nordic countries. Jerring often presented children's

programmes from the other Nordic countries and was careful to mention that the children in those countries could listen to his programmes. But there was also an orientation to other foreign and more distant countries and cultures in some programmes. Jerring wanted to open up the world for Swedish children and to assure them that children live in pretty much the same way everywhere. He emphasized national solidarity but also expressed positive views on travel and other cultures. He showed the similarities (but also differences) between children in different countries.

During World War II there was a discussion about how children perceived the war. How did they respond to the radio bulletins and how much did they understand of the cover-ups, the propaganda of silence and evacuations? (Lundqvist 1979). Some felt that children should be protected and should know as little as possible. One of the children's programme makers, Barbro Svinhufvud, disagreed. She complained in interviews that the children had too little information about what was going on in the world during the war and she wished them to have insights and knowledge, but this did not win favour with her superiors (Rydin 2000:62-63). It was the parents' obligation to inform their children, and not the media. This policy clearly manifests the view of children as vulnerable and in need of protection. Jerring's role as uncle of the nation was strengthened particularly through the charity collections made for the needy victims of the war in Europe, in which Jerring was a central figure. He reminded listeners to *The Children's Letterbox* of the situation of Norwegian, Danish and Finnish children by broadcasting programmes based on letters from children in the other Nordic countries. Jerring had a desire that the children in the Nordic countries would feel connected and be heard over the radio. There was no portrayal of the war itself in children's programmes at this time, but as trustworthy uncle of the nation, Jerring could at least touch upon these sensitive matters.

To sum up, children's programmes during the pioneering days represented various genres, from readings of children's books, mostly classics of children's literature, to dramas in the form of tales with musical interludes. Some full dramatizations with parts played by actors were also produced. However, it was unusual for children to work as actors other than when they appeared as themselves in *The Children's Letterbox*. It was rather the case that women, for example, professional actors, read the stories to children. There were also educational 'lectures' about nature and animals aimed at children, often presented by male scientists. Children rarely participated in the programmes. It was the adults who transmitted messages to the children, so in that sense the voice was authoritarian and unidirectional. Children rarely had a more active part expressing their own opinions, other than perhaps in *The Children's Letterbox* where Jerring sometimes interviewed children about their views on various issues.

Pippi Longstocking and postwar radio

After the Second World War the climate on the radio was more inclusive and programming tended to be of a more entertaining nature. Family entertainment became the major focus with elements of popular education in a light-hearted form, such as contests and puzzles. The moderation in the tone of the programmes that was characteristic during the pioneering days, and especially during the war years, was replaced by a more relaxed and permissive tone. Children need imagination and fantasy games became something of a motto for the post-war programmes. The broadcasting ethos in this period came to represent an ideology that served the young audience with educative and informative programmes as well as entertainment, a combination that according to Scannell (1996) has become typical for public service broadcasting in contemporary modernity. The postwar years became a period when the feature of sociability developed as a fundamental characteristic of broadcasting's communicative ethos, i.e. a more casual tone in order to establish contact with the audience, which simulated a dialogue.

Fantasy and sparkling eyes can in a nutshell summarize the period that succeeded the pioneer era with its romantic view of the child coupled with a sobering moralism that preached obedience, humility, gratitude and cleanliness. A new perspective in children's culture and society in general could be distinguished during the postwar period. Astrid Lindgren and other contemporary Scandinavian writers were inspired by modernism. These authors tried to capture what might be called the childish imagination. It was based on the children's own experiences and spoke to them through their emotional and imaginative life. These authors tried to capture a very unique children's 'own world', one that adults do not always understand. It takes a different kind of child perspective than previously was the case, where the child's upbringing to be loyal and 'good' citizens stood in the foreground.

Many of these new ideas came to dominate children's programmes on radio. A first sign of this was the publication of *Pippi Longstocking* in 1945 which became something of a symbol of this trend. There are many indications that Astrid Lindgren and other contemporary writers were influenced by the freedom pedagogy of the 1930s and new findings on child psychology. Post-war culture became something of a playground for imaginative playful experimentation. The communicative ethos was to address the child audience as an individual person. The 'you' in singular was used when the author read her book and she 'talked' with the audience: 'Now, I will tell you a story about...'.

Pippi broke new ground when it came to the view of children, and above all the female role. The book *Pippi Longstocking* was from the beginning controversial when it was published in 1945. The year after it was published, the book was read on the radio. At this point the literary critic, also a professor

of education, John Landquist, raised his voice and wrote a review in a tabloid newspaper (*Aftonbladet*) which eventually became notorious, in which he 'declared his lack of understanding of a book in which a child swallows a cream cake and sprinkles sugar on the floor'. It was especially remarkable to broadcast Pippi Longstocking on the radio, because 'other social groups than the usual book consumers would be reached by such a program'. Hence, it was assumed to be a class issue in the sense that 'other groups', i.e. lower social groups, were not supposed to be able to handle this type of anarchic children's literature. Scannell (1991:107) discussed similar issues in his analysis of the BBC and claimed that 'what was fit to print was not necessarily fit to hear. A sense of tact...' was expected from the broadcasters. Radio reached wider audiences, which required a certain kind of sensibility and respectability, perhaps. The public broadcasters should represent 'good taste'.

Children's programming on the radio represented a wide range of programmes for a long time, even after television was introduced. It was not until the 1970s when television's output of children's programmes expanded quite extensively that the moving images began to take over the radio as the primary medium for children and radio experienced real competition. In the UK, as a comparison, the radio audience had dropped already during the 1960s (Crisell, 1997). However, radio and television for a long time represented on the whole similar ideologies. The goals of their programmes and their views on legitimate children's culture and the needs to be fulfilled by children's programming went in the same direction. It can be noted that children's programmes are still (2012) broadcast on the radio, albeit on a modest scale.

Television and home

The introduction of television in Sweden and other Western countries can be seen as part of a larger societal change that began in the post-war period and got firmer contours during the 1950s. According to American cultural analyses, television was included in the visions that emerged after the war as the economy started to recover and modernization began, with implications for the home and family (Spigel, 1992). Television had an important role in shaping what was commonly called 'the good life' in the 1950s, a decade in which material growth accelerated and consumer goods were purchased such as refrigerators, cars and television sets. The government official radio report (SOU 1954:32, p. 168) that preceded the introduction of television in Sweden declared that television should be in 'society, culture, public education and services for homes'.

There was an ideological compatibility of the technical utopias in the post-war period and the thoughts of living culture that were shaped at the same time. In home interior décor stories, television was part of creating the illusion

that the home was opened up to the world. The unit was often placed in a room with a huge panorama window or near a world globe or adjacent colourful maps. Behind such an arrangement was the idea of television as part of 'the global village'. The term has come to be most associated with the media philosopher Marshall McLuhan, but it was there much earlier as a vision in interior design magazines (Spigel 1992).

The introduction of television caused the private and the public to merge and the boundaries blur in several ways. New family ideals took shape. It would be the era of the housewife, a dream that became a reality in many countries in the Western world and for a time also Sweden. Daily broadcasts aimed at children and housewives as audiences have been important in many countries. In Sweden, there were no daytime broadcasts at this time, but television fitted well into the modern home, with its parlour or living room. In advertisements for television sets often the whole family grouped around this status furniture, expectant and nicely dressed (Kleberg 1994).

The introduction of television, however, was met with mixed feelings. Initially, the enthusiasm was great. But when the first years of delight subsided, reports began to flow about the television medium's harmful effects. Particularly sensitive was the issue of television regarding children. They were considered to be a vulnerable group and it was obvious that the moving pictures would have strong appeal for the youngest (Svinhufvud 1956).

The content in the programmes aimed at children was quite uncontroversial during the pioneer period of television. A children's department was created producing fictional dramas, documentaries and entertainment as well as educational programmes for children of various ages. Young children staying at home with their mothers were an important target group, a situation that was common in the 1950s and 1960s. The primary goal was to entertain young children, but a mixture between informative and educational content was preferred. However, the very first programme for small children was *Andy Pandy* an import from the BBC. The series was screened until the 'copies were worn' (*Hört och sett*, 1974). In the UK television had been introduced even before World War II and it was thus well ahead of Sweden. Almost immediately, however, domestic programmes were produced. The goal was the same as in the UK (and the US) namely that television would link the family, in particular, the housewife and the at-home preschool children. The mother was just as important as the child. Watching television with the child was regarded as part of good mothering (Oswell 1995).

The programme *Andy Pandy* was adapted to Swedish conditions and received a Swedish voice-over. *Andy Pandy*, who was a puppet, performed small skits along with a few other toys. It is interesting that they did not use real children in this programme, but a doll that acted like a three-year-old was considered appropriate. Under English law at that time, it was forbidden

for children to appear as actors, as opposed to Sweden, where children were welcome into the television studio from the start.

The BBC's goal of the program was to create a kind of children's culture: It was a space in which children could 'build for themselves a heritage of traditional and other stories' in which both preschool children could be constructed as a community for television and pre-school childhood could be 'normalised' (Oswell 1995: 41)

The puppets playing at home or outside the house on the farm. No other environment ever occurs. The programme is thus an extension of the small world of the viewer's home to provide security and recognition. Nothing slightly disturbing or frightening ever occurs, just play, friendly chatting or singing. The activities are of the kind that most children have mastered. The dolls have their own voices, but these are given through an adult, which is said to have been a deliberate strategy in order to establish a childhood that was supervised by the mother, according to Oswell (1995) and *Andy Pandy* has the characteristics of a kind panopticon, in Foucault's formulation, the 'all-seeing' and monitoring mother as a narrator. The Swedish version of *Andy Pandy* featured a girl doll. The programme *Felindaskolan* (Felinda School) became the label for the first series, which was part of a magazine programme aimed at housewives, called *Hemma* (At Home). The adult puppeteer, who handled the puppet talked straight to the audience with an intimate voice, whereas the puppet was addressed in the third person. This way of immediately addressing children was later questioned among Swedish programme makers. It could ring false to pretend that television presenters had contact with the audience. The children might believe that the presenter could actually see out to the viewers. These ideas were a bit contradictory, since it was also important to maintain the intimate and social tone of broadcasting in order to captivate and involve the audience.

Politics and education in the seventies

During the 1960s young people started to question the previous generation's values and views of society. Bourgeois family ideals were rejected and radical ideas made inroads among the post-war baby boom. In media and culture one began to talk about a left-wing wave. Media and cultural institutions became arenas for expressing criticism of the established society. Especially children's culture became a testing ground where new ideas about society, children and the family could be tried. It became a forum for the dissemination of knowledge to new and malleable groups. Children's culture and education was in focus and the provision of daycare for all children was debated. Governmen-

tal investigations were dealing with child rearing issues as well as children's culture. In particular, it seems that the growing commercial children's culture was in focus. Some of these activists reacted against the idyllic portrayals of childhood in children's culture: the innocent child who lived a carefree life in the family's country house or perhaps in a fictional fantasy world. It was a romantic ideal of children that had prevailed. Now we had to bring society also into the children's world.

Advocates of this new and radical movement called for a children's culture that was more realistic and grounded in reality and thus paved the way for children's culture with a pedagogical touch. Here emerged a view of children and childhood where the child's needs were formulated differently than before. Rather than the child as someone who needs to be protected from the outside evil world, the child was seen as a corporate citizen with the right to know what is going on around them and how this can affect their own situation. The child would also be given a voice in the community.

In the early 1970s, the range of children's programmes expanded greatly. A new children's programming department was formed in connection with the establishment of a second television channel, which would focus on younger audiences; children and young people. This department hired young and creative people with a pioneering spirit and fresh ideas. Their head, Ingrid Edström, presented the idea that one should hold an open house from time to time and encourage innovation and creativity. One original idea was the unpretentious poll conducted to find out what the child wanted to know through television. Staff visited daycare centres and kindergartens all around the country collecting questions from children, which became an idea bank of at least 1000 questions. One constructed the child audience to be curious and interested in societal matters.

It was a thriving and dynamic time for children's culture in general, such as in theatre and music, making it easy to find cooperation with institutions outside the broadcasting company. Among other things, drama was used to orient children in societal issues. There was a rising interest in doing research for programme development such as formative and evaluation research. It became the golden time for the Audience and Programme Research department at the Swedish broadcasting company. A particular research group specifically aimed at studying children's programmes was set up.

Education for preschool children

Many programmes had a basic theme that concerned 'wonderment about the world' and what happens there, both near and far. Often these stories involved completely mundane concerns. It could be about going to the post office or

the dentist, taking the train or going to the hairdresser. But it could also be about very serious issues such as parents' divorces, illnesses, war and disasters. Several series addressed children's lives in the Third World, especially in countries with war and conflicts. As opposed to the radio policy during the Second World War when children were spared hearing of wars and disasters, it was now believed that children needed to be informed. They were regarded as citizens and independent members of society.

Educational programming for preschoolers was nothing new, as we have seen the first programming for children in the 1950s was supposed to be 'in the service of the home' and aimed as stimulation for housewives at home with their children (e.g. *Andy Pandy* from the UK). Now, programming expanded to capture a variety of issues. Children's programmes were not supposed to be primarily entertaining, they should be designed to fill certain needs of children and thus have specific purposes. Actually, children's programmes should represent a miniature of the whole output; news, entertainment, sports, factual programmes, dramas etc., which can be interpreted as a sign of raised status for children's programmes within the broadcasting organisation Sveriges Radio.

The children's departments at this organisation represented an experimental space for various formats having educational purposes. However, the American *Sesame Street* series, which has been adapted worldwide to various cultures and languages (e.g. Hendershot 1999, Lesser 1974), was not well received in Sweden when representatives of the Children's Television Workshop tried to sell the programme to Channel 2 (TV 2) of Sveriges Radio. The commercial format with strong sound effects, fast pace, colourful puppets, etc. was not considered to fit the Swedish audience. Much later it was decided to buy the programme format *Open Sesame*. A contributing factor may be that there was a general scepticism about the US and what that country represented. In the radical 1970s there were protests against American imperialism, which also included the promotion of American culture such as the commercial way of addressing the audience. Against this background it is interesting to note that *Sesame Street* has been criticised for being leftist by critics in the USA (Hendershot, 1999: 148).

Instead, the emphasis was on a Swedish-produced series that was called *Five Ants Are More than Four Elephants*. The goal of the series was the same as *Sesame Street*, aiming at the early-years achievement of underprivileged groups of children and providing their families with intellectual stimulation. Methods to approach the target groups were like those used in the development of *Sesame Street*. Producers used educational expertise in the production and pilot programmes were tested on audiences. The series has been one of the most popular produced by the Swedish television of all time. For example, popular comedians were engaged to make playful and humorous sketches with educational aims, such as basics in reading and writing. The

series has a dual form of address in the sense that the jokes appeal to both children and adults.

Series with educational aims were really *à la mode* and there were a number of creative experiments explaining various phenomena or teaching literacy such as words and concepts. I will just briefly mention the series *From A to Ö* from 1974, as it explains 'difficult words' in playful form. It also had this dual form of address, i.e. to reach both adults and children. In one sequence the then Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme appeared. The main character in the programme visited Palme in his office at Parliament House and the prime minister explained the word 'democracy' and he also looked delighted over this attention. This example shows that children's programmes were a national and political issue. The participation of the prime minister as the foremost representative of Swedish democracy showed the importance of public education via the airwaves.

Commercial ideology a challenge for PBS

The media landscape changed dramatically at the end of the 1980s, when the monopoly for Swedish television was broken. Light entertainment in the global output from commercial channels appealed to the young audience. How to meet the competition has been a constant concern for those working with children's programmes. Since the commercial culture has a special allure for children, programme makers at Swedish Television (public service television broadcasting was run by this separate company from 1993) had to offer powerful incentives to keep the audience. A highly compelling competitive advantage was the production of native Swedish language programmes, allowing at least preschool children to remain a loyal audience. But the older children, who can speak English and read subtitles, rather preferred foreign channels. The term 'MTV generation' was coined in the 1980s as a derogatory term for the lost youth who had turned their backs on Swedish programmes.

To meet the competition it was considered necessary to find a different tone and a different idiom. At one of the Nordic children's programme makers' policy meetings the headline was: '*What can we learn from "The Little House in Dallas"?*'. It was the head of the Swedish children's department, Helena Sandblad, who formulated this headline, a formulation that signified the situation they found themselves in. American series such as *Fame* and *The Little House on the Prairie*, like the soap opera *Dallas*, became very popular with young children. Programme makers in the Nordic countries felt the need to take lessons from the commercial way to make programmes. Sandblad argued that they needed to increase the knowledge of 'commercial language and codes to the new children's programme forms'. Furthermore, she argued that

the industrialized society's idiom was supposed to have two opposites – the commercial or selling versus the avant-garde idiom. The selling language assumed that a cultural product is a commodity, whose form will be applied to sales, including marketing and distribution. The design is deliberately flattering by being easy to read. The avant-garde idiom, on the other hand, is based on the artist – the sender's own expression. It is experimental and innovative and thus more difficult to interpret. It is ahead of the trends, rule-breaking and provocative. It was time for a call for renewal, a third form of language which is not manipulative or difficult to interpret. This new form will immediately be accepted by the audience:

Of course you can say that is what great artists always do, and you cannot learn how to do it on a seminar. Shakespeare could, Chaplin could and Astrid Lindgren is a nearby example at us. (Sandblad 1982, memorandum)³.

On another occasion Sandblad stated that 'children and Americans have bad taste', referring to children's preferences for the entertainment from the global commercial output.

The new approach to the child audience was realized as follows, in brief: The genre of social realistic programmes, such as documentaries with a political message, disappeared. Another tendency was that the strong emphasis on language and conceptual training as part of efforts to reduce skills gaps in society more or less disappeared from the output. There would be more emphasis on fairy tales and fantasy stories. Magazine programmes get a more entertaining tone and child actors, such as programme presenters, are increasingly present. The tone of the programmes would be more intimate and deal with strong, hot, black feelings. Sex, love, friendships, bullying, etc. are topics covered in a particularly popular teen magazine programme, *Bullen* [The bun].

The pace was more turned up than before and the imagery more like the commercial with bright colours and animated elements. There would be more shows and entertainment. The slow and straight informative programmes, which aimed to make the world accessible to children, were not as common. Previously, sometimes the clarity was an end in itself and there was nothing that was handed over to the viewers' imagination. There was often a small underline when addressing children, stressing crucial messages.

Adults were also leaving more space to let children and young people themselves to be heard in the programmes. One can track the construction of a new kind of child, i.e. the competent and independent child. In the 1980s and 1990s, one can also see a tendency for a child-centred discourse to take place. In 1989, the UN produced the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which the majority of nations in the world have signed up – even if, in practice, they do not carry out all of its provisions. Such a children's rights discourse has affected the views on children and childhood (Messenger Davies 2010):

A major source of contemporary ideas about childhood is the notion of children as a group of people that has 'rights' and childhood as a period in which special rights are applicable, which do not apply to adults. This is a particularly twentieth-century idea, partly linked to the foundation of the United Nations and the universal doctrine on human rights. It shows how attitudes to children, childhood and their status do indeed change historically. (16-17)

The child is highlighted as an actor on its own terms, where the adult will be more in the background. The adults appear smaller, while the children are independent and strong and sometimes may take the adult role. Youth culture has penetrated down the ages and we get TV shows in which children appear as full-featured presenters. In drama, we meet children who survive on their own, just like *Pippi Longstocking*, but not just in terms of the geniality that characterizes Lindgren's children's stories, but also stories where it is more realistic and which children appear to survivors and sometimes are stronger than the adults.

That children are perceived as active and independent individuals who have certain specified rights, David Buckingham called the 'children's rights' discourse (1998). Buckingham takes an ambivalent attitude towards this approach, however. Firstly, the child audience is assumed to be a conscious and sophisticated group of consumers, a condition that, on the other hand, he says, is an approach welcomed by the commercial children's channels which emphasize that they offer children a private, free zone. However, Buckingham holds that for the BBC competition had positive consequences for its views of children. He argued that paternalism and the dominating middle-class values which emphasized the 'do-gooding' attitude, which meant that they talked down to children, have disappeared.

A similar discourse can be applied to the situation of PBS programmes in Sweden, but the situation has not been exactly the same. During the 1970s, the programmes were often radical in their choice of topics but yet a bit too clear in their quest to convey the urgent message. And the adult's voice dominated when addressing the child audience, even if it was trying to be the child's voice. The policy was to reach all children, especially the underprivileged children. Some producers tended to dismiss middle-class values, but still they had very specific ideas of what was good for children to hear and see.

Tradition and renewal

This chapter has focused on paradigm shifts in the output of children's programmes. Still, children's programmes are also informed by tradition, continuity and nostalgia. Sweden is a small country and most of the children's broadcast

culture was distributed by the Swedish Radio and Swedish Television until the end of the 1990s. Purely physical and tangible tradition has been passed on by people who worked with children's programmes as loyal employees for a long time. When television came, staff from the radio went over to it and the heritage of professional competence, norms and values was secured. The monopoly on distribution of broadcasts meant that the staff turn-over was low. Although we as humans change and develop, one can say that a certain value pattern has been maintained for generations of children. The mechanisms that function to maintain the tradition may have been a disincentive to produce desirable changes. A study of gender patterns in children's programmes, including the domestic productions, is illustrative as a case study of how traditions survive. It was shown that children's programs often portrayed a world where the old ideals of security and harmony reigned (Abrahamsson 1983). However, already in the 1960s, the gender debate had started and radical ideas of gender equality won strong approval among children's authors and editorials. But apparently, heritage and tradition are strong and robust structures that just slowly change. Adults often look at their own childhood with a nostalgic gaze and thus emerges a childhood land built on older values. Many authors and programme makers have their own childhood as a model, which means that gender patterns change slowly, in spite of the strong reactions against traditional and bourgeois values during the radical 1970s. In conclusion, the eternal stories will of course stand for continuity while changing childhood discourses will account for the paradigm shifts along with changes in production and distribution techniques as well as adjustments to the changing media landscape. Hence, certain norms and value systems persist for a long time.

But change and renewal is also significant in this study, when taking into account programming in a wider societal and ideological context. Discourses on childhood matters have influenced the output in both form and content. Most notable is that new production techniques, genres, formats and forms of addressing the audience have been developed and have changed the output for children. Regarding portrayals of children, the *child as actor* has shifted over time. During the 1970s when children's television programmes expanded, the magazine format was developed as a typical genre for information and education, however still mostly with an adult presenter as anchor. With time children have gained increasingly prominent and independent roles in programmes both in children's drama series and as presenters in magazine programmes. Good drama series often gain big audiences. So in the competitive climate of the 1980s and 90s this genre has been more visible in the children's output. Several series portrayed strong, active and independent children. The communicative ethos of addressing the audience has also generally become *more intimate*, both in style and format but also in terms of content, e.g. talk about social relations such as love, sex and friendship. Moreover, the emphasis on

dramatized stories with child actors also invites the audience to *emotional and social identification*. The purpose behind this strategy has probably been a double one: To increase television's attractiveness in order to maintain the audience, but also a public service mission of taking a segment of the audience seriously, namely addressing children as citizens and letting children's voices be heard.

Finally, looking at the present situation in the 2000s, we find children's programmes in their own channel, Barnkanalen (Children's Channel). The regularity of former radio and television, with quite specific time slots and schedule-oriented watching, strongly timed to be part of the daily ritual in a special and regulated manner, are gone. But yet, traditions are still kept as many of the 1970s to 1990s children's programs are still repeated from time to time, and new programmes and formats are developing in an intertextual dialogue with the past. Swedish Television also still sets ambitious targets for its audience, however, at this point by experimenting with the Internet in order to find new ways of addressing the audience, i.e. a different communicative ethos allowing children to respond on blogs, for example. Another complication that might require a change in programming policy is the competition from the flow of various media that surround today's children and youth: the Internet, video games and smart phone applications are services that children frequently have access to. Thus, the 'packages' will definitely change. The possibility of more direct dialogues with the audience may be seen a tool for raising the attractiveness and keeping them viewing. Whether children will be addressed primarily as citizens rather than consumers is here an open question.

Notes

1. Ellen Karolina Sofia Key was a Swedish difference feminist writer on many subjects in the fields of family life, ethics and education and was an important figure in the Modern Break-through movement. She was an early advocate of a child-centred approach to education and parenting, and was also a suffragist. She is best known for her book on education, *Barnets århundrade* (1900), which was translated in English in 1909 as *The Century of the Child*. Note: This text is adapted from Wikipedia.
2. The first collection, entitled *Just William*, was published in 1922. Richmal Crompton wrote 38 more *William* books throughout her life: Wikipedia.
3. Sandblad, H. (1982) *Vad kan vi lära av det lilla huset i Dallas?* [What can we learn from the little house in Dallas?]. Memorandum from Children's Programme Department, TV 2, 1982-09-27. Stockholm.

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Chapter 6

Talk Back and Participate!

Cultural technologies and the making of the active audience in Swedish local radio 1977–2000

Michael Forsman

Introduction

Swedish local public service radio (LPR) was launched on a broad scale in 1977. Today LPR is represented by twenty-five stations, embedded in a regional system but referred to as ‘local radio’ in media politics as well as among radio listeners. Local radio has proved to be very popular with its listeners, especially after the deregulation of Swedish radio in 1993 and LPR is still the most popular radio form in Sweden, with one third of all radio listening (Facht 2012).

To act local, sound local and feel local is of course of great importance to the very idea of local radio and for the creation of localness and the conceptualization of local identity (Berland 2009, Hägerstrand 1986). Following Innis (1950) in viewing radio as a space-biased media, favouring dissemination across space rather than continuity over time (such as books), Berland (1992) notes that local radio is not just about geography but is also a ‘cultural technology’ that binds and materializes space into a cultural order and a system of reciprocity between producers and listeners. ‘The local’ is not simply something ‘out there’ that local media ‘mirrors’: radio also creates the very context it refers to; by naming it, narrating it, giving it meaning (cf. Crisell 1986/1994). Thus the production of local radio as a media text (local journalism, traffic updates, weather reports, music and not least, different forms of radio talk about the region and with local people) produces space and a sense and bodily experience of social identity and cultural belonging. This kind of spatial reflection on local radio lurks behind the argument made here, but my main focus is on the construction and conceptualization of the local audience as active and participating. To foster and encourage the audience to be active was of importance already from the start of LPR, and one could even say that the idea of the active audience was (and still is) a part of the ‘communicative ethos’ (Scannell 1996) of LPR, and an important dimension of its ‘institutional intentionality’ (Ytreberg 1999, 2000).

My discussion here concerns the institutional logics and the techniques used to produce the active audience, 1 or as Berland (1992:40) puts it, ‘to find an

audience [...] is also about creating it'. The discussion I offer can be connected to an ongoing discussion within media studies about the ontology, epistemology, history, value and conceptualization of 'the audience'.² The idea of the 'active audience' presented here could be called mediacentric, but in line with Ala Fossi (2005) I argue for a combination of political economy and close empirical studies of radio production seen as a 'a set of social practices' (p. 32). To me Ettema and Whitney's (1994) term 'audience making' seems suitable since it signifies 'the production of institutionally effective audiences that have social meaning and/or economic value'. I am also interested in how the active listener becomes an object for knowledge production, surveillance, governing and management (Miller 2012). Or as Ang (1991:23) puts it 'the audience must in one way or another be imagined and addressable, attainable, winnable, in short a maneuverable thing'.

Miller and Ang approach the concept of the audience with Foucauldian eyes and with reference to such concepts as 'technologies of the self' and 'technologies of truth'. I use the term *technologies of audience making* in my historical analysis of Swedish LPR, and I present four such technologies: *mode of address*, *model listener*, *audience research* and *the audience as producers and participants*.

The outline of the article is as follows. After extending the discussion about the (active) audience, the article is dedicated to a historical description and analysis of the making of the active audience within Swedish LPR. This leads to some conclusions and remarks for future research about LPR and the active audience.

Empirically my argument is based on the historical condensations and materials of Forsman (2010, 2011). The examples used concern such things as language use, phone-ins, liveness, the role of the broadcaster and programmes produced by the audience within Swedish LPR. I have divided my argument into three periods; 1977-1986, 1987-1992, 1993-2000. This parallels what Djerf-Pierre and Weibull (2001) identified as two main periods in the history of Swedish radio and television; decentralization (1977-1987) and commercialization (1987 onwards). To this one might add: digitization and convergence (very much an ongoing process). My presentation is tinged by chronology, periodization and narrativization (White 1987), and can best be described as an example of what Drotner (2011) distinguishes as media history from an institutional perspective.

The concept of the audience

It might be proper to start an article like this by asking: what is the audience, what defines the audience, where is the audience and how can it be studied? McQuail (1997) as well as Butsch (2008) offers a long historical perspective

to show how the concept of the audience has changed with different media, from ancient theatre to broadcasting and beyond. According to McQuail, the audience is not only defined by demographics or behaviour, but also by medium, content, genre, subject, style, time or place (e.g. local radio news in the morning). There is also a fundamental spatial dimension to the audience, since it is always situated somewhere (for example, in a region). Generally there is also a physical separation between the place of production (the stage, the broadcasting studio etc.) and the place of reception (the home, the car etc.). Another matter of fact is that the audience can both act (and be regarded) as individuals and as a collective (like in a theatre). To be part of the audience means to enter a specialized social role (being a local radio listener), through a voluntary act, which also means entering an institutional relation.

The audience exists both outside and inside a medium. When thinking of the audience as being *outside the medium*, issues of demographics, media choice, appreciations, behaviours and meaning making arise, and this can be covered both by qualitative and quantitative research. When it comes to the audience *inside the medium* one is more concerned with the idea of the audience as a part of the production circuit. The audience exists through mediation and textual codes, but always in relation to the presumption of some kind of reception act. Thus the audience also exists so to speak *in between production and reception*. These relationships are of a paradoxical kind since they involve someone not present (Meyrowitz 1985) and revolve around a form of distant intimacy (Thompson 1995). To understand this form of symbolic interaction one can turn back to Horton and Wohl's (1956) seminal article about the audience as engaged in a parasocial relation with media institutions and their gallery of media personas (talking heads etc.) through an act of coded communication based on cultural techniques used by the broadcaster (such as radio talk) in trying to reach someone who is not present. The audience on their part are 'expected to contribute to this illusion' by 'believing it' and by rewarding the medium and its media personas with 'sincerity and loyalty' (Horton & Wohl 1956:220).

For the radio industry the normal way for the radio audience to regard the audience is to see it as a myriad of potential listeners, existing outside of the broadcast, with different media habits and being hard to conduct. The competition over the media audience is harsh and it is a scarce resource (Picard 2005) and the main currency (Bolin 2011; Napoli 2003) in 'the audience market' (Picard 1989). The idea of the audience as 'someone' to address and communicate with is also at the very core of broadcasting intentionality (Scannell 1996).

Therefore the handling of the audience is essential *before* the broadcast (schedules, programming, segmentation), *during* the broadcast (liveness, mode of address), and *after* the broadcast (monitoring, ratings). It is in relation to this that the idea and factuality of the active audience has to be understood;

as a measurable quantity, a particular quality of an audience, and as a mode in communication.

The active audience

Historically the idea of the active audience to a large degree has been created as the opposite to fears of a passive, misled, narcotized, pathological or disorderly mass audience (Butsch 2008). The idea of the active audience arose early (Blumer 1933) and was scientifically established with the paradigm of uses and gratification research, for example in Herzog's (1944) studies of radio listeners. This kind of functionalistic view of society and the underlying ideas of rational choice contrasted both effect research and Marxian critique of the cultural industry as a form for mass deception (Horkheimer & Adorno 1947/1981). Later reception studies and cultural studies came along and supported the idea of the active audience as creative, reflective, media-literate, meaning-making individuals (Livingstone 2008).

Biocca (1988) asks, however, what is meant by 'an audience activity'. Among the activities he proposes the act of being selective is prominent (choosing media, content and user mode). According to Biocca, the activity of the audience also has to do with the intended act of media use and the cognitive processes preceding and following it. Something is also utilized through the act of media use; being informed, educated, entertained, experiencing a sense of company, community etc.

What is missing above is of course the activity of doing something that somehow can affect the output of the media organization. Examples of such activities could be: writing a letter, email or SMS (text message); entering a competition; voicing an opinion on air; being part of a vox pop interview; entering web-based music polls directed by the radio station; answering questions in an audience survey; participating in a focus group; sharing media content over the internet; or creating something that becomes part of the output. The definition of 'active' is of course not static, and the techniques for producing and discursively handling the active audience change considerably over time, something this article also aims to show.

The concept 'the active audience' refers both to the audience as content providers and as users of media making meaning and creating identity (Moores 1993, 2000). The active audience is a textual code and an outcome of production techniques. Thus the active audience is not only about what the audience does with the media but also about what the media do with 'the audience'. This approach might seem cynical, but personally I am very fond of Scannell's phenomenological view of (public service) broadcasting as truly trying to communicate with a wide audience, but at the same time I argue that the techniques for producing and managing the audience are becoming more dominant.

Four modes of audience making

Now I want to present what I consider to be four conceptually different but in practice interrelated *technologies of audience making*.

The first technique concerns *mode of address*. This concept originates from literary theory and the author's way of addressing an implied and expected reader (Eco 1979). Thus reading is not isolated from its production (Berland 1992). In mass communication and a context of broadcasting it is conditional, not least for public service radio, that the heterogonous, widespread and absent audience must be addressed as 'anyone and everyone' and 'anyone as someone' (Scannell 1996:11, 14). It is also important that the listener can feel 'special, but not alone' (Hendy 2000:165). This is close to Gans's (1957) concept of the 'imagined audience' and also relates to Anderson's (1983) 'imagined community'. As we will see, the start of LPR marked a shift in the mode of address from that of national radio at that time towards more local perspectives but also more space for informal talk. With time it moved more and more in the direction of what Goffman (1981) calls 'unscripted talk': that unfolds in real time and appears as 'fresh talk' even though the formats used may be very predictable. In *Media Talk* Hutchby (2006:2) asserts that media audiences of today are 'bombarded with a rich variety of talk'. Another contemporary aspect of audience making relating to mode of address, and also to audience research, is the construction of target audiences; often based on demographics, which is of course a fundamental concern for local radio, to actually address and find subjects of common local interest as well as the right approach to 'reach out'.

The second production technique refers to what can be seen as an individualized version of the target audience; namely the *model listener*. This idea was first developed within commercial radio and is still an essential component in the production of format radio and in the programming of commercial radio stations (Keith 1987; Norberg 1996). The model listener is part of a management technique based on the creation of a personalized version of the target audience. The main idea is that the broadcaster should have this individualized version (with a name and personal make up) of the target audience and an imagined audience in their mind when on air (Forsman & Stiernstedt 2008).

The third technique concerns different forms of *audience research* such as different forms of ratings. Bjur (2009) offers an overview of the long (since 1928) Swedish tradition of audience research, and also points to an increasing use of qualitative techniques, such as focus groups. Such data are essential for radio management in their governing of programming. Both the model listener and the mode of address are strongly related to facts, figures and meaning extracted from studies of the audience (Stiernstedt 2008, 2013), but this is no pure science: 'sometimes media organizations even prefer less accurate systems if these figures are favorable for their business' (Ala Fossi 2005:257).

The fourth technique also relates to the others, but it concerns the *audience*

as producers and participants. This refers to when the audience participate and act through phone-ins, as a live audience, in interviews or polls, or as commentators (increasingly on the internet) during and after the broadcast. As we will see, the audience during the early days of LPR could also function as producers of actual programmes. The practices and thoughts around the participating and producing audience can be linked to what is called 'the dialogic turn' in research and industry (Philips, Carvalho & Doyle 2012), referring to broadcasting as a space where the public (in their role as citizens) can show public engagement and form public opinion. This involves certain interactional and linguistic logics (Thornborrow 2001), and formats fully dedicated to such 'talk-back radio' (Tebutt 2006).

Voicing the local 1977-1986

When LPR started in 1977 it marked the breakup of more than 50 years of national radio monopoly (1925-1976). Thus Swedish people had no previous experience of local radio. What had existed hitherto, since the late 1950s, was a daily regional news service segment within the national programming (Rahbeck 2001). Apart from this, radio and television were deeply embedded in the idea of the nation (Löfgren 1990). A similar strength of imagined community (Anderson 1983) was hard to form around the idea of the region – which was the principle used for the technical and administrative structure for the LPR system. Regions are bureaucratic inventions that not easily correspond to people's feelings of geographical, historical and social belonging.

Many of the ideas concerning the active audience that now are commonplace were new food for thought when LPR started, and it took some time for the audience to get used to the role of being a 'local radio listener'. The other side of the learning process of becoming 'local radio literates' pertained to the producers who somehow had to imagine the audience they were now set to address. This task might have been even more difficult due to the fact that many of the LPR journalists originated from areas of Sweden other than the parts where they were employed to 'do local radio'.

In the 1970s local radio was established 'everywhere' in Europe (Crisell & Starkey 1998, Kemppainen 1998, Lewis & Booth 1989, Prehn 1998). Here it is important to note that 'local radio' can mean different things in different countries, stretching from community radio to commercial enterprises (Jauert 1997). The Swedish model with a licence-based system of regional stations was not completely unique, what was special to Sweden was the setting up of a separate company for local radio (LRAB) (Hujanen & Jauert 1998). LRAB was commissioned to act in 'stimulating competition' with the public service company responsible for national radio, Riksradiön (RR).

Offering space for local opinion, through local journalism and audience participation in the broadcast as well as segments where the audience could act as producers, became a part of the communicative ethos of LPR. This was also one side of how local radio distinguished itself in relation to the still rather paternalistic style of much national radio.

One of the political motives behind the start of local radio was the ambition to help radio survive as a medium in the 'the age of television' – where radio had become a background medium, making it an 'invisible medium' (Lewis & Booth 1989) and even 'the forgotten medium' (Pease & Everette 1995). With local radio a whole new function (localness) that television not could offer was added. Another explanation behind the launch of local radio was the expanding public sector in Sweden and its need for an effective information channel. Many politicians hoped that LPR would function as such a channel, but few among the local radio journalists wanted to act as carriers of public announcements.

Another motive behind the start of LPR was the diminishing competition in many local press markets in Sweden, where in many places only one newspaper, often of liberal or conservative origin, remained. Another problem for the social democratic government during the preparation period for LPR was how to defend the radio and television monopoly within the late modern democratic system, with a constitutional freedom of speech, and where print media had long since been free to act on market conditions. All of this in relation to a long tradition of social democratic government (continuously from 1932 to 1976).

The idea to set up a system of local radio to complement and compete with national radio was proposed in an official report on radio and television (SOU 1965:20), but the technical, financial and administrative plan for LPR and the idea to form LRAB came up later (SOU 1973:8). After a period of successful experimental broadcasts during 1973 LPR was launched.

Here it is also worth saying something about the *Zeitgeist* and some of the opinions that had a bearing on the proliferation of local radio and the idea of the active local radio audience. One was a widespread critique against centralization of (media) power. A similar critique concerned the depopulation of the Swedish countryside and the creation of large and anonymous municipalities. Parallel to this there was a flourishing interest in the oppressed masses and the experiences of the common man. Other themes of the time were anti-commercialism and a liking for 'authentic' cultural expressions and traditions.

When LPR started hundreds of journalists were recruited to LRAB (Engblom 1998). Many of them wanted to explore local power structures and confront the elites and act as mediators for local opinion. There was also an urge to depict common life, rather than to act as a megaphone for regional power interests. This is well caught in this quote from a female journalist working for a LPR station in the northern part of Sweden (Radio Västerbotten): *We wanted to give a voice to ordinary people and have politicians and people in power*

answer to their deeds [...] We wanted to let the audience be heard in the debate and to give them a voice, that we could be the transmitters of. We were really driven by this pathos.

Mode of address

So how should the makers of local radio address their audience? To a large degree this was done in accordance with values built into the very operation of public service; sociability, sincerity, dailiness, eventfulness, identity, authenticity (Scannell 1996).

One important difference in the mode of address in LPR compared with national radio was the informal tone. Questions of language and power were discussed and participation and identification as part of the local community and democratization of the media were on the agenda. This can be illustrated by this depiction of the very first broadcast ever from Radio Norrbotten (the LPR station covering the most northern part of Sweden). The two persons involved are the station manager (Kerstin) and the first programme presenter in Radio Norrland (Noa).

The station theme rings out. Then Kerstin says in a very mundane tone of voice, Well. Noa, now we are here. Yes we are, he says. What do you think we should talk about? (Boëthius 1997).

This was an obvious deviation from the previous paternalism of radio, and the subtext was an invitation to the audience to enter into a daily and relaxed relation with the local radio institution, in the making of 'our radio'. One journalist from Radio Kalmar on the Swedish east coast gives this description.

It was 1977 and lots of fun and pioneer spirit. Now we were going to turn the old national radio upside down. We were not going to stay in stiff and locked studios, reading from a script when speaking into the microphone. We wanted to go out among the people and be where they were, and do radio on their conditions. We wanted to play down the medium. No longer should it be exclusive to contribute to or appear on radio.

There were many similar attempts to break up the dominant radio discourse during the early years of LPR. This occurred not least in the news broadcast, since it was a genre of high symbolic value both in relation to national radio and to media democracy. An example of this can be taken from Radio Östergötland (southern central Sweden) which experimented with the news format, questions of news values and comprehensibility and audience engagement. For a trial period the station's morning news broadcast started with an open question: 'What should we focus on to today?'. Other stations organized their news services around one local theme per week, instead of the ordinary

fragmentary flow of incoming news. Others tried to present news in a more dialogical and conversational mode (Lindblad 1985). Another important aspect of the local radio style was the use of local and regional dialects. Some stations even (jokingly) asked for a dialect CV when recruiting personnel. There were many shows and segments in LPR that somehow brought up issues of local language, local tradition and local culture, from a historical, almost ethnographical, perspective.

The model listener

When local radio came about it challenged many of the norms of national radio, which was still marked by the 'power of the producer' and rather academic principles and 'editors' managing 'their programme'. Already from the beginning LPR was more dependent on 'management by scheduling' (Hujanen 2004; Nukari & Ruohomaa 1993) as the LPR stations broadcast in three daily 'windows' in the channels for broad national programming (P3). From the beginning there were twenty-four LPR stations (the twenty-fifth was launched in 1986). The station managers had substantial autonomy but were obliged to deliver about twenty hours of local radio for P3 each week, with emphasis on news and current affairs.

The mode of address and the production principles behind the local segments in P3 (three hours a day) differed significantly compared with national radio, and much of it was about engaging the audience. Among the founding principles of LPR were: the ambition to work with live broadcasts; frequent use of portable recording techniques; local presence, multitasking and the importance of a centrally placed broadcasting house, preferably in a setting with great local or regional symbolically value. Resources were scarce in LPR and there were not such strong demarcation lines between creative staff and technical staff.

This mode of production also postulated a new mode of listening. Traditional radio had been built around radio as the 'theatre of the mind' (Arnheim 1936/1986) and presupposed a listener concentrating rather on the programme. Local radio was more profane and referred more to that was close by to the listener. This meant that to the classical public service credo 'to inform, educate, entertain' one could now add, 'engage'. The live broadcast, the connection of the region through local news, local traffic reporting, local music, local culture, marathon broadcasts from debates in the county hall, audience involvement, was about creating and confirming an active listener as a local citizen engaged in local and regional matters. Partly it was also about being critical. Radio Västerbotten (a northern station) promised listeners that if they phoned in to the programme Call Us and Sing the journalists would 'pick up the microphone and help you grill the people in office'.

Audience research

There was a lot of research done on the actual and potential local radio listener, not least during the LPR pilot in 1973 (Kleberg 1972, 1976). One branch of the mother company behind LRAB and RR was the office for audience research (SR-PUB). One of SR-PUB's major assignments was a quarterly telephone-based listener survey. One of their findings was that every second person in Sweden listened to local radio on P3 on a daily basis (Nilsson & Nordström 1980). To make sure that LPR would get a sizeable and sustainable audience the local broadcasts were placed in the most popular national channel during the prime broadcasting hours, and this meant that in the early 1980s almost seven out of ten radio listeners listened to P3 (Nordström 1990). Other studies from SR-PUB were more qualitatively oriented, such as the studies of comprehensibility (cf. Höijer 1990). The question of what the audience actually grasped and understood was of course of great interest to the LPR stations in their work with elaborating their mode of address and relation to their audience.

The audience as producers and participants

One factual way to open up space for the audience as producers was something called 'public access radio' (Allemansradio). This idea originated from Denmark and aimed to 'tear down the fence' between 'amateurs' and 'professional producers' (SOU 1981:13:32). Almost all of the LPR stations offered their audience technology and personnel to help people make programmes 'about something [of which] they had personally experience' (Nerman 1980:32). The result was 'hundreds of programs and many thousand visitors at the stations'. These mini-programmes could cover almost anything from local music to a radio diary or protests against local political decisions. Many of these programmes came on air. Until the mid 1980s public access radio was an intense and symbolically important audience activity of LPR, but in the mid 1980s it almost disappeared. Instead community radio, which was the first radio form ever allowed outside the public service system, was established on a broad scale in the early 1980s.

Streaming everyday life 1987-1992

By 1986 the process of trial and error that both the producers and the LPR audience had gone through during the P3 years came to an end, when a fourth FM network was opened. With the transition to FM4, the LPR station entered into direct competition with national radio (especially P3) and the ratings dropped considerably. Some of the LPR stations also had to compete in their local markets with some pre-commercial radio stations that appeared within the framework of community radio. What the pre-commercial stations offered

was an amateur version of American music format radio, but still they became very popular with the young, and within LPR voices were raised that there was a need for a change in the mode of address to attract the young and to reform the dialogue with the audience.

Mode of address

When the by now twenty-five LPR stations transferred from P3 to FM4 their broadcasting time was tripled each week. With 60 hours to air came a fundamental shift in programming. The result was a continuous flow of radio talk and music, with a broadcaster hosting three-four-hour live blocks. This FM4 style called for a new conception of the idea of public service and the idea of the audience. In an article in the personnel leaflet this was described as ‘closeness-spontaneity-engagement-active listeners-sound-atmosphere-music. Such is the new quality of local radio’ (*Programbladet* 1985:14). This new LPR style was based on studies of how people use radio as the background to everyday life, which means that channels and station profiles, not single programmes, become important. The listener also wants to be acknowledged in their dailies’, not questioned. If this is not realized the listener will change channel.

One important aspect of the new LPR concept was the idea of having a ‘broadcaster’. The concept came from British local and commercial radio, and the LPR journalists went to England to learn that to be a successful broadcaster it is more important to have an ‘air personality than journalistic diplomas’. The main production ability the broadcaster must possess is how to handle the studio by their own hand, and how to manage lengthy live broadcasts where one must be flexible, entertaining, and able to create what Scannell (1996) calls ‘sociability’. All of this takes place within a framework of a continuous flow of news, music, sports, traffic reports, phone-ins, radio talk and guests coming in to the studio.

This mixture of radio flow is meant to have the communicative capacity to become a fond to listener’s everyday life activities and routines. To achieve this the tone and atmosphere should be personal but not private, familiar and yet eventful (Scannell 1996). Crisell (1986/1994) calls speech ‘the primary code of radio’ and Shingler and Wieringa (1998, s. 30) argues that ‘talk is everywhere in radio’. This kind of ‘radio talk’ is something other than the discourses of news radio and is better described as ‘listenable talk’ (Hendy 2000: 160) ‘intended to be overheard’ (Scannell 1991: 1), rather than just transmission of information. Still it has to be communicative and informative, as ‘a conversation over a cup of coffee or a pint of beer’ (Chantler & Harris 1992:5), but the mode should not become to mundane and definitely not depressing.

In a study of Swedish local radio Åbrink (1998) found that the mode of address in talk radio of this kind should be active and direct (‘My name is NN,

you are listening to X, and the time now is XX'). The tone should connote youthfulness, positive attitude and engagement. Such radio talk confirms the communicative situation (listening to radio) and its time and space (the local) (Berland 1988).

Another part of the changing mode of address concerned the choice of music. Compared with the early days of LPR the FM4 format did not have much space (or money) for live segments with local traditional music. Instead recorded music (on CD) dominated FM4. But it was no music box or pure rotation since most of the music was still chosen individually by the broadcasters themselves.

The model listener

This kind of radio flow and talk radio with updates, information, moods, company and local space has a lot to do with the confirmation of the time and space situation of the listener and their everyday whereabouts ('I hope you will have the chance to enjoy the sun today, all of you driving into town today' etc.) (cf. Berland 1990). Hereby another model listener gets encoded, based on a different decoding of the idea of local public service radio and the listener's situation and reception, as seen and imagined among the producers (Ytreberg 2000). During the pioneer years the LPR listener was still very much positioned as someone that had the radio transmission in focus, and a deep engagement in the local community. In FM4 the idea of the active listener was more someone distracted and busy. And at the end of the FM4 era several PLR stations, with influence from foreign commercial radio, started to create their own conceptualizations of an individualized model listener.

Audience research

As already stated the transfer to FM4 meant a substantial loss of listeners. On the other hand, one could say that LPR managed to keep a lot of their audience in spite of the competition from P3 and pre-commercial community radio stations. Among listeners the main reception mode was to combine FM4 and P3 during mornings and driving hours (Nordström 1990). The making of the active audience during the years 1987-1992 differed from the previous period and was not characterized by the same kind of elaborative work around mode of address, or progressive research attempts from SR-PUB to capture the audience's activities and modes of radio reception. Instead much seemed to be on hold, just waiting for deregulation.

The audience as producers and participants

When FM4 began the idea of public access radio was since long gone. The production method of getting out of the studio to meet the locals in their everyday

lives was more expensive than studio-based hours of radio flow, and in FM4 there were many hours to fill. Thus the ‘the active audience’ more and more came to be represented by vox-pop interviews in the journalistic segments or by phone-ins as a part of the talk radio format. The kind of ‘talk-back’ radio (Griffen-Foley 2004; Tebutt 2006) that FM4 represented was not completely new, it had been used in national radio to a certain degree starting within youth programming in the late 1960s (Forsman 2000), but there was a substantial rise in the amounts of competitions, greetings and requests for favorite songs to be played within FM4.

In talk-back radio the audience becomes a part of the content and with the move to FM4, and more broadcasting time to fill and a new competitive situation, it also became more important for the producer to know how to manage and control the audience (cf. Stiernstedt 2008); as a flow during the day, between channels, and between different media. One sign of this was the substantial rise in the usage of jingles made to appeal, attract and hold the audience. This also changed the soundscape of local radio. In many stations the production of jingles and sound themes of the station (station IDs) had previously been something the technicians did in their spare time. Now many LPR stations instead ordered pre-prepared jingle packages from the US, Holland and Great Britain, and many stations even presented internal guidelines for when and how to use the jingles.

Recalculating 1993-2000

When the deregulation of the Swedish radio market finally came about after almost 70 years of public service monopoly, the reform that was launched by the conservative-liberal coalition (1991-1994) was not that well thought through. One of the political premises was that commercial radio would function as a new form of local radio, going into direct competition with LPR in the audience market. This idea combined neoliberal propaganda for ‘free radio’ with a radio utopia with perfect competition and hundreds of small channels, expected to cover everything from sports and minority programmes to jazz and classical music.

One reason that this dream did not come true was that the government chose to distribute the licences for the broadcasting rights for commercial radio through auctions. This procedure in combination with unrealistic market expectations about future profits triggered the prices to rise to amazing levels. The result was that the annual fee – in combination with an immature market for radio advertisements, strong competition from commercial television, and lack of professional competence – forced many minor players out of business almost immediately, and after just a few years only a handful of networks

remained; and they controlled all aspects of the market; permits, sales of advertising and programming.

The period between 1993 and 2000 were turbulent for the public broadcasting company Sveriges Radio (Swedish Radio, SR). The new commercial stations captured around one-third of the entire radio audience, mainly in younger age groups. The new conditions of competition meant that public service radio had to recalculate their corporate and cultural GPS to be able to navigate in the new landscape of Swedish radio. One of the strategies that SR presented to meet the competition was to merge LRAB and RR into one company. Another major task for the new management of SR was to make these two previous separate traditions of public service activities and different company cultures join forces, and raise a common competitive consciousness. All of this in an organization marked by decades of monopoly.

One important dimension of this was a major channel reform in 1993 that reformed P3 from being a broad channel of popular music and entertainment for the whole population into a profiled youth channel for those under 40. The other side of the channel reform was that FM4 became P4 and a channel combining local transmissions with national programming, targeting 'those over 40'. One consequence of this was that much of the old P3 (programmes, personnel) was either discontinued or transferred over to the new 24/7 channel P4, where twelve hours of daily local narrowcast from the twenty-five LPR stations soon turned out to be the backbone to high ratings.

For most LPR stations the new order of 'local' commercial radio meant competition with two commercial stations (beside Stockholm, Göteborg, Malmö where more permits were available) offering their versions of semi-national format music radio, targeting 15 to 45 year olds.

Mode of address

It soon became obvious that the commercial stations hardly had any local material to offer. So the obvious thing for SR to do was to increase its local output. One sign of this competitive consciousness was that many LPR stations in the mid 1990s launched new morning shows, with programme titles juxtaposing the mundane intersubjective phrase 'Good Morning' with the more pompous and communalizing name of the region (e.g. Good Morning Stockholm). This was a sign of the hardened competition; against morning television, morning shows in the commercial stations, and the very popular morning show P3 offered around this time, and by now everybody in 'the 'radio business' knew that the formula for a prosperous station was 'Music Mornings Marketing'.

With the competition from commercial radio, issues of branding came up. The SR management wanted to clarify the naming of the LPR stations and in 1996 it was decided that all LPR stations henceforth must use SR as a prefix

juxtaposed to the region (e.g. SR Malmö, SR Göteborg etc.). One year later came another and similar decree for a mandatory usage of one graphic profile and policy over all stations. Another dimension of central management in production, channel proliferation, audience targeting and handling of audience flows was the transfer to network-based digital production routines. One important part of this was the implementation of *one* system for computerize musical programming (SELECTOR), and overarching corporate solutions for the distribution of news segments for local and national editions, and technical solutions to get regional synergies in the handling of traffic information etc. All this was in order to gain rationality and to be cost efficient and competitive. Yet the LPR stations had to have their specific relational bonds to their own audience to uphold the listener loyalty. This is how the station manager of Radio Blekinge (on the south-east coast of Sweden) described how the station should feel: [as] *a real good friend, the kind of friend that you can trust and like to share your time with and like to show every side of your life to. A friend that accepts you for what you are, but at the same time wants to challenge and inspire you to new experiences. It is the kind of friend that is always there, and that can tell you straight away when something important has happened, that shares your joys and worries, and that you can turn to when you feel insecure.*

The model listener

The rise of a competitive consciousness came about slowly. Some LPR stations clung on to the old era, and still in 1993 Radio Norrbotten said they wanted to foreground local theatre, the elderly, the poorly educated, and the finnish speaking part of the speaking population, in the sparsely populated area the station was to cover. Less than a decade later 'SR Norrbotten' had internal discussions about what to do to get enough 'customers' (listeners) and how to please them. And this is how Radio Örebro described their ambition in 1995: 'We want to be business minded and like to think just like a profitable company with good service and quick deliveries of a flawless product'.

The concept of having a more personalized model listener became widespread during the late 1990s. The way to create a model listener is to humanize and narrate the targeted audience into a 'person'. Often this is a female character and she is given a name, job, family, interests, attributes, lifestyle and personal characteristics. Of course the model listener does not exist for real, but within the production she can be referred to as almost real: What is she up to this weekend? How are the kids? Then there is the visual dimension of the model listener already mentioned. It is with all this in mind that the broadcasters should try to address the imagined listener directly.

Shortly after the turn of the new millennium the SR central management decided to lower the age of the target audience for P4, as a follow up to a

lowering of the target age for P3. This meant that the LPR stations also had to recalculate. Overnight Radio Blekinge changed the age of its model listener (from 50 to 38 years) and in the operative plan for 2006 one could read that this was to be the year when ‘any ordinary 38 year old living in Blekinge will feel at home in our profile’. In 2009 there was an additional sharpening of the model listener profile in Radio Blekinge. Now she was even given a name, age and personal make up. Ebba, aged 40, was described as follows: *She is married and has children. She values her free time more than money. She is worried by what is happening in the environment and she wants to be well informed. She is interested in home styling, food, vacations and in meeting new people.*

Audience research

As Swedish Radio (SR) reconsolidated and rationalized in order to make ends meet, SR-PUB was discontinued. Instead a new institute (RUAB) was formed through a joint venture between the commercial stations and the public sector. (In 2006 the commission went over to the market research institute SIFO.) RUAB's main mission was to conduct quartile phone surveys on radio listening. For the commercial radio stations ratings are the air to breath. Or as Ala-Fossi (2005: 57) puts it ‘a broadcast station without a measured audience may have lot of listeners, but it does not have much to sell’. Kempainen (1997:229) wrote that deregulation and competition led to a whole new order of audience research, ‘very much concerned with industrial and commercial matters, just as the old politics was primarily cultural and ideological’.

After ten years the commercial radio market in Sweden had reached maturity (Picard 1989). One sign of this was that the minor players had left the market, while the majors went into oligopoly, and then duopoly, with MTG and SBS as the only players, each with their handful of station brands. The main product of these radio companies is the audience. It is ‘their ears’ that is sold to advertisers. This product is immaterial and the radio audience as such does not really exist before it is aggregated and transferred into figures and statistics representing cohorts and patterns of listening. Before that it is just ‘raw material’ (Bolin 2011), or as it were myriads of people listening to radio in different ways (Ruohomaa 1997).

Through audience research and especially ratings the audience is manufactured into an object that can be sold (to advertisers), displayed (to politicians) and used (in management). To form this product there is a need for ‘facts and figures’. At the same time these surveys and statistics become a part of people's reflections about themselves as part of a radio audience (cf. Hermes 2012). These techniques for monitoring and manufacturing the audience can also be seen as a form of surveillance or as a sociological fantasy (Miller 2012) where the audience on the one hand is something that the media companies

manage and on the other hand is something they are always trying to locate and understand.

As the intermedial and intramedial competition becomes tougher and more complicated there is a risk of inflation of audience statistics as well as lowered results, and there is a tendency that 'good audience research' becomes that which confirms the beliefs, ideologies, interests and objectives of the management (Petrov 1997).

The audience as producers and participants

Competition is severe in the contemporary 'attention economy' (Albarran 2010: 25). Within this context the audience becomes an important productive force, first and foremost in its traditional role as receiver of broadcasting (the broadcaster needs an audience to have in mind and to address in a communicative act) based on an institutional intention (Scannell 1996, Ytreberg 1999), but the audience also functions as a productive force within the actual broadcast, for example via phone-ins, in interview segments etc.; and the audience is a commodity and has symbolic value.

I want to end with reflections on some techniques used to get data out of audience activity. Within the commercial radio sector one part of the production of a format is to do call-outs and music testing (Forsman & Stiernstedt 2008). Stiernstedt (2008, 2013) describes how the commercial stations have now abandoned the auditory test and call out (by phone) and instead use web-based systems for music tests, which listeners enter voluntarily to rate songs. These data directly affect what songs are played on the station and how often. Through this audience activity, and the production of data and musical opinion, a bond is formed between the commercial institution and the audience as participants. The latter act in their role as 'the audience' and they are rewarded with the feeling of having been active and also getting their favourite song played on the radio. The programming of the station is made through the computerized system SELECTOR. This is now also the technique used by SR.

Conclusions

In this article I have discussed what I call technologies of audience making as a way to discuss the construction of the active audience as a part of Swedish local public service radio 1977-2000. My argumentation can be related to an ongoing discussion within media studies around the idea of the audience in the prevailing era of social, mobile and personal media and do-it-yourself-culture (Gauntlett 2009; Hermes 2009; Livingstone 2004), and in relation to questions of surveillance (Andrejevic 2007; Lyon 2007; Miller 2012).

Within LPR there is a long tradition of focusing on and engaging with the audience. In the first era of LPR, when the broadcasts took place as daily inserts in the national channel P3, much was about engaging the listener and offering production facilities to listeners for them to make programmes of their own. After LPR transferred to FM4 in the mid 1980s the broadcasting schedule grew extensively and the way to address and confirm the audience changed in direction towards a more distracted model listener, mainly using radio as a background.

What the twenty-five LPR stations nowadays offer is to a large extent a similar and continuous flow of local journalism, traffic updates, weather reports, music and radio talk. The result is network radio based on 'updates, mood and company'. This also seems to be the norm for local public service radio (and commercial radio) in many other countries (Crisell 2006, Hendy 2000, Starkey 2011).

Since 1993 and due to media competition the twenty-five LPR stations have been integrated into the round-the-clock channel P4. Herein the local narrowcasts are intertwined with slots of national programming consisting of news, sports, music and entertainment. Nowadays P4 as a whole is also strongly integrated with the internet. Within this multiplatform environment phone-ins, game segments and frequent call-outs to the audience to go online or make use of SMS to comment on the content of the broadcast are essential. In relation to this the idea of having an active audience becomes even more crucial. This means that quarterly listener ratings and ongoing attempts to rejuvenate the stock of P4 listeners are not sufficient; it also about reforming radio in relation to a condition of 'post-broadcasting'.

In a context of FM radio the making of an active and participating audience can be a way to achieve better ratings, increase audience loyalty, add additional sign value to the brand, and more legitimacy to the broadcaster, and thus a better chance of survival. LPR still stands as emblematic to Swedish public service and is of great importance in the intramedial competition against commercial radio. LPR is also essential to FM radio in the increasing intemedial competition with television, the internet, social media etc., and seven out of ten people in Sweden still listen to radio on a daily basis (Facht 2012:46). In this LPR holds a strong position, but the body of LPR listeners is aging and radio is no longer the preferred medium for younger generations (Bjur 2011).

The (active) audience as a part of programming, policy making, broadcasts and audience research is inevitably a reduction, a taxonomic simplification and statistical aggregation, a discursive construct of what empirically and in reality is a personal and situational process in the creation of identity in everyday life (Ruohomaa 1997, Steeg Larsen 2000). Still many individuals might have genuine experiences of making a difference by their own participation in call ins etc., but from a production perspective such audience activities are more

about branding, corporate narratives and part of how to control and motivate the work force within the radio station (Stiernstedt 2013) than about democratic development. This 'commercial logic' is not only a dimension of private radio; it is also easily traceable within contemporary PLR.

I want to finish with some reflections in relation to two of the dominant media logics of radio (and other media) of today. One concerns digitization and the post national and post regional situation of networked based communication. How relevant will local journalism be in a situation where journalistic practices are being disseminated and acted upon by amateurs in blogs etc., and how popular will talk-back formats and call-ins appear as the possibilities of voicing and video blogging your opinion in private internet-based forums increases? The other prevailing logic is not at all new, just more pervasive. Already in the early 1990s Berland (1992) criticized the dominance of transnational musical formats and entertainment values in local radio, in relation to the idea of local space and experience as a matter of politics of difference, and she asked what will happen when also formats for dialogue, talk back and opinion become more and more in accordance with a neo-liberal and global idea that confirms the practices and ideals of a universal space of consumption.

Notes

1. Thus I am in this case far from the idea of the active audience as it has appeared within the traditions of uses and gratification studies, reception studies and cultural studies (Moores 1993, 2000).
2. Some of these discussions concern the history of the audience and differences between different media in their audience make up (Butsch 2008, Mc Quail 1997). Others focus more on the economic evolution and evaluation of the audience within the media industry (Napoli 2003, Picard 1989, 2002), as well as the symbolic value of the audience in different markets (Bolin 2011). There is also a concern regarding the media audience as an aspect of public opinion and a prerequisite for a public sphere and modern citizenship (Couldry et al. 2010).

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Media Professionals:
Occupational Strategies, Norms and Practices

Chapter 7

Wanted: Academics, Journalists and Personalities *Recruitment to Swedish Broadcasting*

Lars-Åke Engblom

Introduction

When it comes to producing radio and television, many have been called, but few have been chosen. When the Swedish Broadcasting Corporation (Radiotjänst, from 1957 Sveriges Radio) celebrated its first twenty years in 1945 the broadcasting staff – producers, announcers and others – was limited to just 36 persons, 34 men and two women, and almost every Swede knew their voices. As more radio channels were started and television appeared on the scene, the number of staff increased rapidly. Over all, however, it has been quite an exclusive circle that has supplied the content of Sweden's radio and television channels.

How were these individuals recruited? What particular competences and merits were required? Who was selected – and why? And what general patterns can be detected in the recruitment of producers, journalists and announcers by the broadcasting companies in Sweden? These are the main questions in this chapter. It focuses on the recruitment process during the period when radio and television were established. The programme makers of that era would put their mark on the programme content for a long time.

Recruiting is one of the crucial conditions for making radio and television. The persons chosen to produce the programmes and to be heard or seen are those with whom the audience will identify the broadcasting corporation. Their task is to fulfil the demands and expectations of both the owners and the audience. Within the given limits, they have the possibility to decide the content and form of the programmes. Undoubtedly, they are the key group in the broadcasting business.

The power and influence of individual media producers has been emphasized, among others, by the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu in his book *Om televisionen* (On television). Bourdieu's argument is that journalists achieve their social importance from having a *de facto* monopoly on the means for producing and spreading information. Through these means, they can decide

the access to the 'public space' – the possibility to reach a large audience, of both ordinary citizens and other cultural producers, such as scientists, artists and authors (Bourdieu 1998: 67–68).

There are thus good reasons to examine the recruitment to media companies. Bourdieu has also developed theories and terminology regarding such recruitment processes; he speaks, for instance, about symbolic capital as an important asset in the competition for attractive positions and employment opportunities. One form of symbolic capital is cultural capital, which includes the ability to express oneself orally and in writing, familiarity with classical music or literature, and having been educated at prestigious schools. Bourdieu also discusses the importance of social capital, that is assets in the form of kinship, personal contacts, ties between old school mates – in short, how well connected a person is.

There are several studies on the composition of the people employed in the media sector. In particular, the background, professional ideals, and attitudes of journalists have been studied, from Sweden as elsewhere (e.g. Asp et al 2012; Djerf-Pierre 2007; SOU 1975: 78; Weibull et al 1991). There are, however, few studies of the recruitment process itself.

Comprehensive studies of the history of broadcasting in the United Kingdom (Briggs 1965; Crisell 2002; Scannell & Cardiff 1991) deal a little with the recruitment of the pioneers. According to Briggs, many young people who shared the 'public service' philosophy of John Reith, the BBC's first Director General, applied to the BBC:

Throughout the late 1920s and the early 1930s the BBC attracted to its service a considerable number of men and women who believed in broadcasting almost as a social and cultural crusade. They included a high portion of young people and of men who had served in the War but who, on account of some awkward versatility or some form of fastidiousness, idealism or general restlessness, never settled down to any humdrum profession after war was over. (Briggs 1965: 13).

Crisell discusses how the BBC recruited experts to strengthen its didactic approach (Crisell, 2002, p. 30). Scannell and Cardiff describe the selection and training of the first announcers, 'the voices of the BBC', which was partly the responsibility of a professor of phonetics and secretary of the BBC Advisory Committee of Spoken English. It was thought that the influence of broadcasting together with universal compulsory education would lead to standardized speech. It was therefore the task of the BBC to define that standard (Scannell & Cardiff, 1991, p. 176).

Gomery, in his history of broadcasting in the United States, analyses different aspects of the social role of gender, race and class in the networks. He points out that by the mid 1930s women already dominated daytime programming both as creators and listeners. One reason was that radio manufacturers,

networks and advertisers sought to construct family use of the radio set. This meant centering attention on women and “their” home space. Radio listening shifted from being a male-oriented technical hobby to a family activity. Some networks focused on breakfast shows, including “news for women”, which were venues for women to speak to a female audience (Gomery, 2008, pp. 42-45).

This study will describe how some key groups of staff in Swedish radio and television were recruited and what merits were important in this process. First, the pioneers, the people who were entrusted with establishing the programming in the 1920s and 1930s, then the announcers, who on the one hand were the official voice of the broadcaster and on the other an essential link with the public. A third group were the journalists, who were hired in great numbers when Sveriges Radio took over the news broadcasts itself in both radio and television. Among these, the sports journalists are a special group. Several of these combined journalism with hosting very popular entertainment programmes.

In addition, the largest single recruitment project within Sveriges Radio – carried out before the start of the second TV channel, TV2 (in 1969) – will be treated. On that occasion 2500 people applied for 100 producer or journalist posts. Finally the chapter deals with the recruitment policy of the commercial and public service companies after the dissolution of the radio and television monopoly in Sweden.

The chapter is based, to a large extent, on internal Sveriges Radio documents and interviews carried out within the research project ‘Stiftelsen Etermedierna i Sverige’ (The Swedish Foundation of Broadcast Media History). A more detailed presentation of the recruitment of staff to radio and television in Sweden can be found in my book *Radio- och TV-folket* (Engblom 1998).

The pioneers

The Swedish Broadcasting Corporation (Radiotjänst/Sveriges Radio) was established with the BBC as its model. The company was to work in the public service and the programme content was to concentrate on enlightenment of the people, culture, education, and news service. The national news agency Tidningarnas Telegrambyrå (TT) took care of the news, while Radiotjänst hired personnel of its own for all the other programs. All technical personnel employed by the National Telegraph Agency (Telegrafverket).

Radiotjänst first broadcast on 1 January 1925. By that time, trial broadcasts had been carried out for a couple of years by the radio industry, the telegraph agency and local radio clubs. These had a varied content, such as concerts, entertainment programmes, recitals and children’s programmes. As a result of this there was already a relatively large number of people with experience

from producing and broadcasting radio. When the position of editor in chief was announced in the autumn of 1924 there were more than 70 applicants. At the same time there was also a process of recruiting a deputy editor in chief, a music expert, an announcer and two regional officers for Göteborg and Malmö, in all six programme staff. Prior to this, the head of TT, Gustaf Reuterswärd, had been hired to work halftime as senior director. He held this dual position for ten years.

The executive committee of the board evaluated the applicants' merits and made the first appointments. A journalist from the newspaper *Svenska Dagbladet* was appointed editor in chief, a well-known composer became head of the music department, a music critic of the newspaper *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning* was appointed regional officer in Göteborg, and the holder of a doctorate in the history of art got the same position in Malmö. Among the first six employed were also a military officer who had studied radio technology at the BBC (Gösta Malcolm Lilliehöök, also winner of the Olympic gold medal in modern pentathlon in Stockholm 1912) and the announcer Sven Jerring.

Jerring had most experience of radio. He had been a diligent contributor in the trial broadcasts of a magazine publishing house and immediately became a very popular radio voice. He had graduated from secondary school and served at the Swedish delegation to Saint Petersburg before becoming a journalist. Eventually, Jerring made an exceptional radio career and would personify Swedish radio for several decades. He was the natural choice of reporter at any large event, including sports. In 1925, he established a children's programme (*The Children's Letterbox*) which was broadcast regularly until 1972, and contributed more than any other person to making Radiotjänst respected as well as popular.

Hand-picking

Following this first series of recruitments with open advertising, Radiotjänst turned to hand pick the directorial staff. Special divisions were set up for the drama and lecture broadcasts, and two well known cultural personalities were in the 1930s appointed as directors; the poet Hjalmar Gullberg and Yngve Hugo, the principal of Brunnsvik, the adult education college of the labour movement. At the music department one of the most famous composers of the country, Lars-Erik Larsson, was engaged as conductor. The academic mould was also strengthened. Several members of the editorial staff held higher academic degrees. Thus Radiotjänst was an exclusive cultural institution.

In this way Radiotjänst resembled the model of the BBC, where the staff was seen as a cultural elite – an enclave of Oxford and Cambridge graduates – ‘cementing in a very English way the worlds of gentility, government, the higher professions and the high table in a social combination of the “well-connected”’ (Burns 1977: 99). Asa Briggs writes in his history of the BBC:

The favourite image of the BBC during the 1930s was that of a great British institution (...) an institution which was different from other institutions, which took decisions that quite deliberately diverged from the decisions many – perhaps most – listeners would have taken. (Briggs 1965: 12).

The BBC and its programme staff considered their main purpose to be to give the audience an educational and qualitative content according to the ‘public service’ philosophy of John Reith, the first Director General (1927-1938).

Radiotjänst took small steps to complement its personnel even though the broadcasting hours doubled during the first decade to about 3000 hours. In 1937 the number of licence-fee payers passed one million. Only Great Britain and Denmark had more listeners per capita. The new recruits often had special knowledge in expanding or new areas, such as school radio, religious broadcasts and children’s programmes. No recruiting announcements were published; when the head of a department had made his mind up about a certain person, he took his suggestion to the general director, then the board made the final decision.

In 1946 a government commission put forward a report that confirmed and accepted this state of things:

In most cases the recruitment has been made without the position having been declared as free to apply to. To the leading posts, the board has called persons, who through occupations in other areas have been seen to possess the prerequisites to become good broadcast officers. To the lower permanent positions have generally been appointed persons who through a probation period of a couple of years have merited themselves for this, and during these years have acquired the necessary vocational training. Broadly speaking, these methods of recruiting have been satisfactory (SOU 1946:1, 117).

Academics and musicians

The commission also made a compilation of the broadcasting education and experience of personnel before their employment at Radiotjänst. Of the 36 employees, 25 had an academic degree, while eight had a background in music, one had previously worked as journalist, one had been a primary school teacher and one had worked in theatre. Among those with an academic degree, five also had experience in journalism, five had been teachers, two had backgrounds as writers, two had degrees in music, one had been employed at a scientific institution and one had worked in the theatre. Thus three-quarters were academics and of the remaining quarter almost everyone had a background in music (SOU 1946:1, 116).

The commission’s report does not convey the distribution in terms of gender, but two of the 36 were women. They had been hired on permanent positions

in 1941, one for producing 'women's programmes', the other for children's programmes (Franzén 1991, p. 266). The first women were hired on a temporary basis in 1937. The female pioneers were obliged to produce programmes for a mainly female audience (Elgemyr 2005, p. 60). The first female news reporters were recruited in the late 1950s (Persson 1987, pp. 131-132).

In this respect, radio lagged behind the newspapers, where during the 1930s there were around 50 women active as journalists in Sweden (Lundgren 1997: 121). In Radiotjänst there was a strict demarcation line between male and female positions. As late as in 1938, sixteen out of seventeen female employees were office personnel, the seventeenth was an assistant to the editorial staff of the programme magazine *Röster i Radio*. It would be almost 20 years, 1944, before the first female announcer was heard on air. During a couple of weeks in 1929, the male announcers had indeed been complemented by a female colleague, but she gave up after massive negative reactions from part of the audience. Likewise the first female news reader caused massive protests from listeners (Engblom 1998: 52).

At that time, it seems to have been easier for women to get jobs in the commercial sector than in public service. This was mainly due to the nature and volume of the programme-offerings. In the USA radio programmes aimed at women's perceived needs and interests filled the airwaves between 9 am and 6 pm. Programmes dealing with topics such as cooking, childcare, health, fashion and women's business news competed with soap operas and light musical programmes for women's attention. According to Gomery, the importance of the radio soap opera to American women cannot be overemphasized. Soaps even gave women work. The most creative and prolific writers of soap operas were women (Gomery 2008: 45). In Sweden radio was mostly silent during the daytime.

Disregarding the distribution in terms of gender and only looking at the professional backgrounds of the employees, these coincided quite well with the subjects of the broadcasts at this time: 42 per cent of the 3150 broadcasting hours in 1945 consisted of music, 21 per cent of news/facts/sport (including the externally produced TT news), 13 per cent culture broadcasts, and the remaining 24 per cent, in order of mentioning: announcements and weather, religion, school radio, children's programmes, minority programmes and (2%) entertainment (Schyller 1996: 10).

The qualification most sought after was expert knowledge in the areas of the different programmes. Academic degrees were considered a guarantee that the staff had the necessary competence. In addition, a number of famous people from the cultural sectors were recruited to senior positions, emphasizing the radio's role as an important cultural institution. The staff had a marked educational mission, like the BBC and other licence-financed broadcasting corporations in Europe. This was reflected in the recruitment policies during the first decades.

The announcers

For those without specialized knowledge, contacts or other required qualifications to be handpicked, there was an open – but also very narrow – way to the microphones. It consisted of the announcer candidate tests that began in the 1930s and were still arranged in the last decade, largely conducted in the same manner. The tests were announced every now and then, and no formal qualifications were required to take part, but the competition was harsh.

One of those who managed to pass this needle's eye was the future editor in chief, Nils-Olof Franzén. He registered for an announcer candidate test in 1939 and writes in his book *Radiominnen* (Radio Memoirs) how the tests were arranged:

One was given a folio sheet containing short texts in English, German, and French, furthermore an announcement of a missing person and half an hour of gramophone music, where famous and unknown foreign performers in different genres were to be presented with the correct pronunciation. In this way one's general knowledge, to a certain degree, also was to be determined. (Franzén 1991: 142).

It goes without saying that only a small portion of the applicants could be considered, especially during the first decades of radio. The requirement of knowledge of three foreign languages limited the group of candidates to the relatively small number of people who had a secondary school education (barely 4% around 1940). Apart from this, up until 1944, all women were excluded. Another requirement was a voice with nearly no dialect. Actually this meant that only a couple of thousand men, living in or in the proximity of the capital, had the possibility to pass the tests during radio's first decades.

'Men of culture...'

One hot topic of discussion during the first years of the radio was to what degree the different dialects of the vast country of Sweden were to be allowed on the air. Some saw no reason to embalm the dialects, others felt that the radio should contribute to the understanding of the provincial accents in the whole country. With regards to the announcers there was very little space to diverge from the "high-Swedish" that was spoken in the area around Lake Mälaren, including Stockholm. In a series of articles in the broadcasting magazine *Radio-lyssnaren* in 1930 a senior lecturer of language pointed out the 'very powerful role' of the announcer:

He does not say much, and neither should he do so, but what he says is meant to be understood without fault (...) Therefore he may not make a slip, he shall pronounce all names and titles correctly, like the foreign words and he shall have a good 'high-Swedish' diction. (*Radio-lyssnaren* 1930, no 47).

Here too, the model was probably the BBC, where the announcers' responsibility for the language – and the reputation of the entire corporation – was strongly emphasized from the very beginning. The BBC-head John Reith urged the Station Directors to think of announcers as men of culture, experience and knowledge (...) they should devote their whole energies to the preparation and study of the material which they are to speak on the microphones. (...) Highly individualized announcing in the American style was explicitly rejected. The announcers created to a large extent 'the public image' of the BBC, according to the historian Asa Briggs: 'In several respects this was to be an image drawn from upper-class or upper middle-class life. Speech was to be correct, although not stilted.' (Briggs 1965: 292).

John Reith was also concerned that the announcers should not project themselves, but declared that a rule of strict anonymity should be followed. No member of the BBC's staff should be permitted to publish books or articles except with the consent of the Managing Director (Briggs 1965: 292, 294). Anonymity and greater formality went together. These were important decisions of the 'institutionalization' of the BBC, which also was exported to other 'public service-countries', including Sweden.

Yet, Sven Jerring, the first announcer in Sweden, was not particularly anonymous. In a short time he became one of Sweden's most famous and popular persons as a result of the many other assignments given to him. On the other hand, there were also in Sweden announcers who were known to the general public only through their voices. Passing the announcer candidates test could, nonetheless, be a gateway to a long and successful career in the company. The editor in chief Nils-Olof Franzén is already mentioned, there are many other examples of men who seized the chance the announcer's position offered them.

Berndt Friberg, one of the veteran announcers and a popular radio producer, wrote in an article that the combination of announcing and programme work was 'from all views' successful. Announcing gave routine and confidence in front of the microphone. Producing programmes gave a special feeling for the composition and presentation of the programmes. Friberg also emphasized how Jerring and his immediate successors created a professional radio announcer tone, 'personal without being self-assertive, nice without being ingratiating' (Engblom 1998: 52). Part of the announcer ideal was also that the voices should be pleasant to listen to, as Scannel and Cardiff also emphasize in their history of the BBC: 'As links with the public their voices needed qualities that were attractive to listening ears (...) The golden mean was an educated, but classless voice that all might find acceptable and none offensive.' (Scannel & Cardiff 1991: 176).

The announcers were important to the broadcasters for several reasons. As symbols of the institutions they were anonymous voices whose speech and pronunciation were trained and vetted to be formal, correct and unvarying. At the same time they were an essential link to the public.

Thus, the announcers were expected to be both anonymous and personal. It was up to them to manage the tension between the institutional and the personal voice. The company wanted a neutral and strict presentation, but some announcers and even a portion of the audience may have desired a more personal presentation style. This tension still exists today; the differing approaches most recently came into conflict in autumn 2012, when SVT decided to make the programme presenters invisible – only their voices were to be heard.

At any rate, the announcers really are key persons in the broadcast companies. Their selection and training therefore had very high priority. This not the least demonstrated by the composition of the jury that evaluated the tests at Radiotjänst. The jury was composed of the company's most senior managers and most experienced producers. No one was accepted by chance.

The journalists

In the middle of the 1940s, the dominance of academics among the broadcasting staff started to erode as the range of programmes was broadened and became more focused on news and social life. TT's (The National News Agency) monopoly on news bulletins was ended and Sweden gained two radio channels in 1956, when Sveriges Radio started to broadcast its own news.

When television was introduced in Sweden in 1956 (as a part of Sveriges Radio), it also had a newsdesk. On top of that a number of broadcasts on social issues and local news broadcasts were established in both radio and television. At the end of the 1970s Sveriges Radio was divided into four different companies, one for television, one for national radio, one for local radio and one for educational broadcasts. The total number of staff increased continuously up until the mid-1980s to almost 7000. From 1955 to 1985 more than one staff member was hired every other day. The total number of staff in the public service broadcasting companies has been reduced by more than 40 per cent since 1985 and numbered 4000 in 2012.

During the years of expansion the journalists marched on a broad front into the houses of radio and television and soon became the largest group in the production of broadcasts. In the beginning, the recruitment of this category followed the same pattern as before. Very few positions were publicly announced and the journalists were handpicked by the managing editors.

Newspaper background

Most of the newly hired journalists came from the newspapers. No systematic testing of their voices, such as the announcer candidates test, was made. Thus dialects did not have to be a hindrance in news reporting. When the regional

and local news desks were established, they were to a large extent populated by journalists with strong anchorage (including idiom) in the areas they covered. These reporters were also often heard in the national broadcasts.

Thus, the competence and the background of the journalists were more important than how their voices sounded. Neither was it a merit for the television journalists to have special knowledge of film production. The managing editor Oloph Hansson, responsible for recruiting to the commenting news programme *Rapport* at the start of TV2 in 1969, maintained that 'the picture should not be crucial to our editorial staff. If the piece could not be illustrated, this would not stop the news (...) we should keep the picture in a short leash.' (Engblom 1998, p.140).

Of the eighteen editorial staff that Hansson hired, eight came from the desk of the radio news programme *Dagens Eko*, four from the other TV channel, four from newspapers, one from a scientific journal and one from a news agency. Thus two-thirds came from other parts of the same organization. By this time internal career paths had started to develop, the news desk of *Rapport* was one of the highest in status. The first level was often the local radio stations. A similar stratification of journalists could be seen in other countries; the British sociologist Jeremy Tunstall made a distinction between two careers after a study of the BBC: an elite career in the national press for those from prestige universities, and a 'rural career' for the majority. He identified the foreign correspondents as exemplifying a typical elite group with the same upper-class background and education as other elites in the society (Elliot 1977: 143).

The central television news desk consisted of 34 men and four women in 1968. Sweden was, however, probably the first country in the world with a female news announcer. The breakthrough of a more gender-equal recruitment came in the 1980s and 1990s, even though the public service companies at this time started to decrease their personnel and the circulation of personnel was low. Yet, during those years the equality of men and women became an increasingly important political issue. The more equal gender distribution of students in journalism colleges and in higher education also took effect. Adding to this, in the case of the Sveriges Radio companies, both the union organizations and the management started to prioritize gender equality. The licence fee-financed radio and television companies were expected to and did take a pioneering role in this. At the turn of the millennium a gender balance was almost reached.

Political balance

During the big wave of recruitment of journalists in the 1960s and 1970s, the political balance was more important than the gender balance. Journalists in public service radio and television were expected to be objective and impartial in accordance with the programming guidelines.

Since the news editors were covering the daily political events, the composition of the staff was naturally more closely examined. Therefore it drew a lot of attention when three reporters with broad and varied political experience were recruited to the central editorial staff of the news in 1969. They were the former secretary of the conservative party, Sam Nilsson, the social democratic prime minister's former secretary, Allan Larsson, and the editor in chief of a magazine connected to the agrarian party, Ivar Petersson. They were named 'the blue, red, and green power grains' after an advert for washing powder. The hiring had been made by the managing editor and it led the working committee of the board to question the existing order of delegation. In the fierce polemic in the press that followed, the radio director denied that the trio had been chosen based on their political merits, but the recruitments were still seen in this light. It was a manifestation – and the culmination – of the idea of balance that prevailed in Sveriges Radio during this politically charged period.

The incident of the 'power-grains' was an isolated event. In the neighbouring country Finland, on the other hand, a formalization of the political influence was actualized. The majority of the working committee of the Administrative Council in 1974 proposed guidelines of personnel policy stating that 'in selecting personnel responsible for programming and the practical realization of programmes the relative proportion of political views in society shall be taken in consideration in addition to professional skill and development potential'. This statement received very negative attention not only in Finland but in all Scandinavian countries, and at its next meeting the Council decided, in a somewhat offended tone, that 'since this position aiming at political balance has led to claims in the media that it is contrary to existing law and international agreements, the matter is hereby filed until the veracity of the claims is established' (Endén 1996: 173). In practice the matter was buried. In Sweden the episode in Finland was used as a discouragement from the involvement of politicians in the operations of recruiting and broadcasting.

A special way

The sports news desk was recruited in the particular manner that had been framed by the sports editing manager Lennart Hyland at the football world championship in Sweden in 1958. Hyland, who in 1945 had been hired as a young journalist, had in the 1950s made the entertainment show *Karusellen* into the greatest success ever in radio and risen to be the 'crown prince' to the legendary Sven Jerring. Gradually he took over Jerring's role as the leading radio reporter and sports commentator, and came, as had Jerring, to personify Swedish radio and television for several decades.

Lennart Hyland also had a strong position internally and constructed his own system of admissions to create a network of reporters with a vast knowledge

of sport, the ability to commentate directly without written script and with a voice suitable for the media. More than 400 applied, of these fourteen were finally called to do a microphone test. The candidates were to commentate an A-league football game and were questioned about their knowledge of sports by Hyland himself.

One of the reporters selected this way was Lars-Gunnar Björklund who later was to apply and develop a similar manner of recruiting when he was in charge of the sport news desk of Sveriges Radio in Göteborg. In 1969 Björklund started a popular football show *Tipsextra* (with live transmitted English matches every Saturday afternoon) and advertised for sport reporters who would cover sporting events in the western part of Sweden on a freelance basis. There were 170 applications of which 24 candidates were gathered to a round of tests with three components: (1) directly reporting from a football game, (2) follow up interviews after the game, (3) writing and reading a post-game commentary of about two minutes. Five of the candidates were selected as freelancers and as the sport news desk expanded in Göteborg, Björklund completed his staff with more free-lance reporters according to the same principle (Engblom 1998: 146).

The in-house supplementary training was an important part of the Hyland-Björklund model. Those admitted were kept busy both in radio and TV, on the regional as in the national level, and continuously received constructive criticism from their mentors. They especially became experienced in reporting live.

'The Hyland-Björklund School' became one of the most fertile recruitment projects in the history of Sveriges Radio. Those who graduated became the foundation of the sport desks in Stockholm and Göteborg. Many of them became, just like Hyland and Björklund – apart from their work in sports – national superstars. They were all men though; the first woman in the sport news desk of Sveriges Radio, Mildred Eriksson – also the first radio sports reporter to have graduated from journalism college – was hired in 1977 (Dahlén 1999: 355).

From the 1950s onwards, the journalists thus increased their numbers greatly. This was due to Sveriges Radio building up its own news desks nationally and regionally. The journalistic competence was found mainly at the newspapers, whence the majority of the journalists were initially recruited. Progressively, they were increasingly recruited from the universities' journalism programmes and other journalism schools. These were formed in the 1960s, coinciding with Sveriges Radio's growing need for journalists. A large part of the students from the journalism programmes spent their internships in radio or television and thus got the chance to merit themselves for further employment.

The recruitment to the news desks did not just influence the news broadcasts. Many news journalists continued on to other central functions within the company and could influence the entire programming. The majority of the first regional managers had a background at the news desks: five out of six programme directors at the extensive reorganization of Sveriges Radio in 1978

were originally journalists and 23 out of 24 local radio managers had started their professional careers as journalists (Engblom 1998: 228f).

The journalists' qualifications consisted mainly of experience gained working on newspapers and their general knowledge. Of the journalists that were hired before the introduction of journalism programmes at the universities, few had academic degrees. Their professional skills and experience were more important than competencies directly connected to the radio or television medium. Voice tests were rare outside of the special recruitment process for sports journalists. Special skills in film production, more related to television as a medium, did not give any special favours when applying for a job at a television news desk.

Populating a new channel

When it was decided that Sweden should have a second television channel in 1969, Sveriges Radio estimated that an increase in personnel of 650 persons would be needed. At that time Sveriges Radio needed all types of personnel, because the company produced almost all of its programmes itself. In the programmes division alone, 130 staff were to be hired. For the first time, the company advertised broadly and throughout the whole country for programme staff.

A total of 2461 applied, 70 per cent of whom were men. The pruning started with going through the applicants' formal merits. Two-thirds were selected for a psychological test, especially constructed for this hiring. After the test, just over 200 of the applicants remained. Those were called to individual interviews.

Prior to these interviews, the director general Olof Rydbeck in 'a strictly personal' letter instructed the managers that were to be in charge of the selection. He emphasized that the candidates, in different ways and thoroughly, should be 'examined about their unreserved willingness to submit to the conditions that follow the radio law, the contract with the government and effective programme rules. Applicants that give rise to doubts regarding this should not be accepted.' The director general also sought:

A body of general producers, who would be as useful as possible, with the prerequisites to be deployed in various places in TV. Thus, education from film schools and the like should not be too highly valued. Rather, it is important to, if possible, to hire people with education and interests in social science. (Engblom 1998: 132).

From these guidelines, a questionnaire with seventeen points of evaluation was developed. The traits that were evaluated were, among other things; the candidates' judgement, creativity, education, motivation and organizational capacity. In the end 53 persons remained – 41 men and 12 women – who were accepted to half a year of producer training. The average age was 26.

This meant a rejuvenation of the staff of Sveriges Radio. Three out of four lived in the Stockholm area, thus the capital region was clearly overrepresented (Engblom 1998: 132, 134).

While the interviews were being conducted, a public discussion arose about the questions asked. From the political left a writer in *Aftonbladet* claimed that Sveriges Radio was conducting political inquiries. Later a popular anecdote spread from the political right about the staff of the new channel claiming that a Vietnam demonstration had marched in to the radio station and remained there.

That was an exaggeration, even though the hiring to TV 2 took place during the strong leftist political trend at the end of the 1960s. The small group who had passed all the tests and interviews was a well examined body. The political discussion that emerged from the recruitment to TV 2 was rather about the general recruitment of the company – and to all media – during these years. Parallel to this, recruitment of journalists to the news and current affairs desks at Sveriges Radio was going on. At the same time a large number of reporters and producers were hired on a freelance basis for shorter or longer periods of time. When Sweden adopted its first employment protection legislation (LAS) in 1974, many of these were employed. These ‘unplanned’ appointments were much larger in number than those made during the recruitment to TV 2 in 1967 and 1968.

A common denominator for the recruitments to TV 2 and to the news and current affairs desks of Sveriges Radio was that they were based on knowledge of content. Voice tests were rare and experience from film was, as put forward in the instructions from the director general, not a determinant merit when the new TV channel was to be staffed.

Nor was there any significant respect paid to the gender balance at this time: 80 per cent of the producers recruited to TV 2 were men, 100 per cent of the new script girls were women, as the job title implies. Many of these later became producers.

Wanted: personalities

The employment and personnel policies of the public service companies were reconsidered in the 1990s when they were faced with competition from commercial radio and TV channels. Now they were faced with the issue of keeping the employees that were most attractive to the competitors. Apart from this there was also a need for rejuvenation; those hired in the large wave of appointments around 1970 were now 20 years older.

However, the first channel to challenge the Swedish monopoly, the satellite TV channel TV 3, avoided recruiting staff from SVT (Swedish Television). The channel was launched in 1987 by the industrialist Jan Stenbeck as the first

brick in the media empire, Modern Times Group (MTG), he was building. He considered that the employees of SVT had been taught the wrong way of working and he set up the MTG headquarters in London to get away from the Swedish media environment (Engblom & Wormbs 2007: 169).

A different strategy was chosen by TV 4 – the channel that won the competition for the concession of the third terrestrial channel in Sweden, and in 1990 received the monopoly for terrestrial commercial TV – which recruited a large portion of its employees from SVT. One of the initiators of TV 4, Ingemar Leijonborg, had been editor in chief at SVT and brought his entire management team from his previous employer, among them the news directors Lars Weiss and Jan Andersson. Among the producers who came from SVT was Jan Scherman, who would be TV 4's CEO between 2001 and 2011.

Andersson and Weiss had full liberty to engage whomever they wished. Most of those employed they knew from before. The ones recruited also often knew each other. The TV 4 news desk consisted essentially of one single network of people. In all 37 reporters/managers were employed, 23 men and 14 women. Out of these, 27 came from SVT or Sveriges Radio, seven from newspapers, two from journals and one from a news agency (Engblom & Wormbs 2007: 204). Thus Andersson and Weiss handpicked their collaborators in the same manner and from the same environment as did Oloph Hansson when he put together the desk of *Rapport* at TV 2. They had a rewarding task, many were curious about the new channel. When TV 4 announced vacancies for anchors before the launch over 1100 applications were received.

Pursuit of talents

The introduction of new TV channels increased the demand for skillful anchors and programme presenters. They became an important factor in the competition between the channels. The most attractive personalities were paid remunerations that were unthinkable in the monopoly days.

In addition, the TV companies started to search in a more organized way for potential programme presenters. Especially for youth programmes, the recruitment was conducted more systematically, often through auditions, but also different ways have been tried, such as talent shows, based on recordings sent in by applicants. The winner of a talent competition, for example, was offered a probationary position as prize.

When SVT in Växjö received the responsibility for the youth programmes on TV 2, more than 200 candidate presenters were tried in front of the camera. At SVT in Göteborg a manual was developed for presenter tests to find young people with 'charisma, enthusiasm, an amount of life experience and preferably some kind of experience from the stage- or TV/radio'. It was an advantage, but 'definitely not a requirement' if the applicant (who preferably would include a

photograph of him- or herself with the application) had journalistic experience (Engblom 1998, p. 200).

A survey among those who had been presenters of MTG's youth channel Z-TV and the youth programmes from SVT in Växjö showed that one third had experience from the music business. Many had also worked in different kinds of service industry; the most common occupation (apart from the media) was bartender. Eleven of the 28 applicants had an academic degree. These results imply that a different type of young people have been applying to – and are wanted by – the TV business than before.

Competition has probably contributed to a less fortuitous recruitment than before. There has been an increase in the number of advertisements, and in the specifications in them. Often both voice tests and video recordings are asked for. This illustrates the move in importance from content to form made during the first decades of real competition on the field of radio and TV in Sweden.

Conclusion

The programme staff of the radio and television stations in Sweden has been mainly recruited through: (1) handpicking, (2) testing, (3) announcement of vacancies, and (4) provisional engagement. Sometimes there has been a combination of methods.

Handpicking occurred mainly during the first decades, but also later in connection with the construction of the news desks. Different kinds of tests have been applied in every period, both in order to test media specific prerequisites (such as voice qualities) and to test knowledge of content. Announcement of vacancies was scarcely used at all during the first decades, but has recently become standard. A fourth road has gone through provisional engagements and commissions, such as temporary positions and journalistic internship.

The aim of this study is to examine the characteristics of those who made it through these more or less open paths to careers in radio and television in Sweden and to identify the competencies and merits that determined their success.

It is difficult to give a general answer valid for the entire period from the start of radio, as both the nature of broadcasting and the conditions for it have changed significantly over time. It is nonetheless possible to identify three phases in the recruitment. The first can be called the academic period (up until the 1950s), the second the journalistic period (1960s, 70s and 80s) and the third the competition period (from the 1990s onwards).

During the first period, which encompasses the build-up of radio in Sweden and its first decades, people with a background in academia dominated. Almost 70 per cent of the programme staff had an academic degree, and a large contingent had a musical background. What the radio sought during this

period was expert knowledge in the fields that the programmes treated. In addition, the company made great efforts to find suitable announcers through tests which examined both the candidates' general knowledge and their skills at oral presentation. Using Bourdieu's terminology, to be considered for employment during this period required a high degree of cultural capital.

The journalistic period coincided with the massive expansion of public service media in the 1960s, when the number of employees rose from 1200 to 6600 in 25 years, amounting to one new employee every other day. During this period, television and local radio was established and then significantly expanded. In particular, news and societal programming grew and a majority of the new programme staff were journalists. These were taken from newspapers and from the new journalism courses at the universities. They were selected on the grounds of journalistic and content specific competence, through advertisement and hand-picking. It was not necessary for them to have any specific competence regarding the format of the broadcasting media, such as a good voice or knowledge of film production. When the second public service TV channel was started, psychological testing was used, but this was a one-off event. Professional experience and personal contacts were more important when the large stream of journalists entered the radio and television building. During this period, social capital in the form of personal contacts and relations of different kinds were the most important.

During the competition period, when public service broadcasters were challenged by commercially financed channels, the competition for jobs in radio and television became stiffer. Several new channels appeared, but the number of permanent staff in the public service sector was almost halved. From all quarters, there was a great demand for programme presenters and other personalities that could give the various channels a profile. The presentation of the programmes became more important and job advertisements would increasingly ask for voice samples, photographs and video recordings. Auditions were arranged to search for new talents. Symbolic capital, both cultural and social, can still be valuable in these competitions, but it is no longer as decisive.

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Chapter 8

A Long and Winding Road

Gendering processes in SVT news

Monica Löfgren Nilsson

Bachelor wanted. Preferably tough and career-oriented. Must be willing to work around the clock. Preference given to candidates who have never considered the true meaning of equality. Lack of interest in women's struggle is rewarded. We are looking for an authentic lion, who is brave and can get through everywhere. Good looks and a sense for contemporary fashion style, but not challenging, are appreciated. The applications should be sent to Swedish Radio's news programmes, Rapport and Aktuellt. All applications will of course be processed by men. (female reporter advocating in a Swedish tabloid, 1978)¹

Well, apparently there are some cases when gender (female) has been considered more important than competence in the recruitment process. Indirectly, it affects the quality negatively. (male reporter, 2000)

Men are systematically favoured in all contexts. They are considered more valuable than female journalists. (female reporter, 2000)

Introduction

When the first news programme on Swedish public service television (SVT), *Aktuellt*, went on air in 1958 women were basically invisible, both as sources and as journalists. The absence of women caused no reactions, the state of affairs was considered quite natural among both men and women at the time. Since then the situation has changed drastically and Sweden ranks as number four in the Global Gender Gap index 2012,² closely after Iceland, Finland and Norway. SVT and the news departments have made a substantial effort to achieve gender equality both on and off the screen since the 1970s. The road towards equality has been lined by progress and backlashes, by conflict and consensus, and in the early 2000s gender was still a debated issue in the news department at SVT. Being a public service company, SVT is under governmental

regulation; equality is part of the mission and the demands are therefore higher on SVT than on other Swedish media. One example among many is when a research report in 2004 showed that women were under-represented within the news. The report caused a public debate about SVT and its 'democratic' mission and it made the headlines in several other news media, although the situation was pretty much the same in most Swedish news media – a fact that was not mentioned.

One of the most important challenges for feminist media research is to understand the place of women in the public sphere, how it has changed and what has propelled these changes. The following analysis sheds light on how the news departments at SVT have been gendered and how the space for women in television has changed. It begins in 1958 when *Aktuellt* went on air, describes the 1970s when a second news programme, *Rapport*, was introduced and ends in 2003 when the former two news rooms at SVT were reorganized into a central news desk, SVT News. Four periods have been singled out: One of a kind – 1958-1965; Fighting for air – 1965-1985; Almost equal? – 1985-1995 and Backlash? 2000-2003.

Television news has always symbolized the pinnacle of the broadcasting profession, however historical studies rarely touch upon gender issues when news production is discussed. Gender studies with historical perspectives mainly highlights women as producers of, or actors within, television series (for example, Seeger 2003; Spangler 2003; Tucker 2007). The existing studies on television news and women deal with questions such as career patterns, professional experiences, sexual harassment (for example, Gutgold 2008; Holland 1987; Hosley & Yamada 1987; Marlane 1999). The studies mainly aim at writing women into television's history by letting their voices be heard and thereby sharing their experiences. In this chapter, gender issues will be explored on an organizational level. The gender order in the news rooms will be examined by discussing the vertical and horizontal segregation based on gender, the prevailing gender notions, and how journalists perceived and negotiated the gender order in the news rooms during different periods. In the second section of this chapter the theoretical framework will be sketched out. The empirical data consists of in-depth interviews, surveys, a content analysis and various documents and articles in the national media, and in the third section a more detailed description of the material will be provided.

The gendered nature of organizations

Albeit many organizations claim to be gender neutral, and more often than not are treated as such within journalism research, organizations are indeed gendered. Feminist orientated research shows us that gender does not only

provide a key for interpretation of news room processes, it is a distinguishing feature. Theories on gendered organizations suggest that organizations are the outcome of processes that operate on different levels. Joan Acker (1990, 1992) made one of the first attempts to theorize these processes systematically by formulating a set of constructions through which organizations are gendered. These five constructions – gender symbolism, gender typing, gendered interaction, gender expectations and gendered professional identities – have inspired the following discussion in which these constructions are linked to relevant research carried out within feminist media studies.

In gender studies it is apparent that the shared orientations among men and women in professional life may differ despite the possible existence of a shared set of common beliefs, values and understandings among those who are working there. The implication of this is that the central values and beliefs that are taken for granted in many cases are gendered. A central task within gender studies would therefore be to explore how dominating values are associated with, or culturally defined, as masculine or feminine and thereby identify the gender symbolism. Within feminist media studies the dominating news room culture has often been considered to accord better with masculinity and the values and beliefs of female journalists have been described as an opposing culture. Ross (2001), for instance, suggests that the central features of journalism and thoughts about what constitutes good journalism relate to notions of masculinity since ‘modern’ journalism grew out of the ideal of an enlightened, rational male bourgeoisie (see also Djerf-Pierre & Löfgren-Nilsson 2004; Djerf-Pierre 2007; Melin 2008; van Zoonen 1998; Zilliakus-Tikkanen 1997).

Gender symbolism in organizations and institutions can be traced in the division of labour (Acker 1990, 1992; Alvesson & Billing 1997; Gherardi 1995; Kanter 1977), in this case how the news room is (or not) characterized by hierarchies and segregation based on gender. In this article these divisions are referred to as ‘gender typing’ – meaning that notions of gender traditionally have been attached to certain professional fields, and to certain professional positions and working tasks. Associations, non-explicit meanings and unconscious fantasies are embedded in a job or an occupation (Alvesson & Billing 1997), and therefore each job has so to speak a gender written into it. Many socially important jobs have traditionally been given a masculine flavour and the image of top managers, for example, is one of successful, forceful masculinity. Gender typing processes furthermore relate to status: traditionally men’s work has ascribed to a higher social value than women’s and when the dominating gender symbolism is questioned it often leads to fights over positions and beats within the news rooms. To conclude: Gender symbolism refers to the cultural logic behind gender typing which can be considered as the outcome.

Besides gender symbolism and gender typing constituting important gendering processes, gender is also ‘done’ (Acker 1992; Alvesson and Billing

1997; West & Zimmerman 1987) as an ongoing activity embedded in everyday interactions. Approaching issues of gender from a doing gender perspective is a way of putting essentialist assumptions about gender into question, by focusing on daily interactions in the form of routines, rituals and strategies (Löfgren-Nilsson 2007). A unilateral focus on interaction, however, tends to gloss over the cultural aspects of masculinity and femininity (Davids 1995; Gherardi 1994, 1995). Gherardi, among others, argues that gender is not only located on the level of interactional and institutional behaviour, but at the level of deep and trans-psychic symbolic structures as well – i.e. the gender we think (Gherardi 1994). Those archetypes have more stability than everyday action and doing gender in an organization presupposes a set of already hierarchically formed interactions based on the sex-based division of labour and on gender expectations (Gherardi 1995: 130). Gender expectations are therefore central in organizational life. Gender expectations and interactions between men and women enact both dominance and subordination. They create alliances and exclusions since both men and women adapt to them.

The last aspect of gendering processes suggested by Acker (1992) concerns professional identities. Since workplace cultures construct beliefs about and self-understandings of men and women and what is considered as masculine and feminine, they thus construct gender identities. Gendered components of individual professional identities are produced (Acker 1990; see also De Bruin 2004; van Zoonen 1988a, 1988b). Both women and men make adjustments to comply with the gender symbolism and the gender expectations of their organization (Acker, 1992). They negotiate by accepting or opposing the roles/identities available. They also form strategies in order to cope with gender expectations (Melin-Higgins 2004; Van Zoonen 1998b). Organizations thereby play a part in the socializing process, where people have to negotiate and create gendered professional identities.

To summarize: Gender typing, gender symbolism, gender expectations, gendered interaction and gendered professional identities are all central processes within which gendering occurs, and although they are analytically distinct they are in practice part of the same reality. They constitute the gender order in the news rooms. The dominant organizational culture in terms of gendered symbolism and expectations supports the gender-typing process, or to put it differently, the social construction of masculinities and femininities, provides an understanding of the gendered division of labour. Furthermore, the gender we think guides the way we act. However, at the same time interaction shapes the way we think of ourselves as men and women, and gendered professional identities are produced in negotiation with the surrounding work culture and gender typing. It is within this dynamic in terms of mutually reinforcing processes that gender is constructed, rather than at separate analytical levels, with one foregoing and determining another.

Gendering processes within organizations do not exist in a vacuum: they develop as a part of the gender order in society and the gender order in the journalistic field. The place for women in the news, in this case, SVT news, develops in historical, economic and political contexts which will be shown in the following sections.

The study – methodological approaches

This article is based on findings from the research project ‘Women in the Journalist Culture’ and the empirical evidence has been published previously in several articles (Djerf-Pierre & Löfgren-Nilsson 2004; Löfgren-Nilsson 2000, 2004, 2007, 2009, 2010). Several datasets have been collected and the first one consists of 55 in-depth interviews with both female and male journalists – heads and reporters – most of them carried out during 2003-2004 and some during the late 1990s. Journalists who worked during all the four periods (starting with 1958) have been interviewed. The interviews were semi-structured and they vary between 30 minutes and 2 hours in length. The interviews with journalists who had worked during the later periods were mainly carried out at SVT in Stockholm, the others were interviewed in their homes.

The second dataset is a quantitative analysis of 11,294 news stories from 1958 to 2003. This study includes newscasts of *Aktuellt* (SVT1, on air from 1958) and *Rapport* (SVT2, on air from 1969). The sample included eight weeks from each newscast in the following years: 1958 (4 weeks), 1960, 1965, 1968,³ 1970, 1975, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995 2000 (4 weeks) and 2003 (4 weeks). A third dataset consist of articles (national press and the employee newsletter *Antennen*) and documents (letters and protocols) from the SVT archive concerning gender issues. In addition to these three datasets, secondary analysis has been carried out of two surveys; one that was sent out to all female journalists working between 1958 and 2004 and one that was carried out by female journalists within SVT in the early 2000s.⁴

The different datasets have been used to analyse different aspects of gendering processes and they have also been triangulated to search for regularities in the research data. The project and the design are delicate in terms of ethical considerations, all the journalists involved were promised anonymity, which means that some important issues are left out of the analysis (i.e, class matters, sexuality, appearance and looks) and the analysis focuses on general patterns⁵. Four periods will be described in the following chapters and the analysis will show how gender symbolism, gender typing and gender expectations have changed over the years. The last section highlights how journalists have negotiated gender symbolism during different periods and the strategies used.

Inside the newsrooms

One of a kind – 1958-1965

The first news magazine programme on Swedish television that provided news and news commentary, *Aktuellt*, started in 1958. Men totally dominated the news department; the first woman appointed on a permanent full-time basis was recruited in 1960 and there were two female news anchors. However, female reporters from other departments, mainly the Home and Family section, were frequently used as editorial staff (Kleberg, 1999) to provide news from a female perspective. As the news department grew the use of these reporters declined and new positions were mainly filled with male reporters. In 1962 the management of *Aktuellt* decided that the news anchors should be professional journalists and the two female news anchors were also replaced by men. Gradually the news selection criteria started to change and more weight was put on hard news (Djerf-Pierre & Weibull, 2001), which was another reason for the declining support from the Home and Family section. Consequently the amount of women decreased: in 1960 women constituted 10 per cent of the editorial staff, a figure that declined to 4 per cent in 1965, and the amount of stories produced by women also decreased, from 14 per cent to 9 per cent (see Table 1).

Table 1. The share of female journalists in the news (share of the total workforce and share of news produced in *Rapport* and *Aktuellt*)

	% Staff* <i>Aktuellt</i>	% Staff* <i>Rapport</i>	% News produced <i>Aktuellt</i>	% News produced <i>Rapport</i>
1965	4		9	
1975	25		8	10
1985	45	10	34	24
1995	37	29	34	31
2003	SVT news	45	38	30

*Staff = persons employed as journalists

The news department provided a very narrowly defined space for women: of all the news stories produced by women during this first period of news casting, almost half were in the fields of human interest or culture. However, these were not regarded as high status areas and the stories making the headlines were usually accidents and crime stories. High status areas, and areas where specialist reporters were required, were politics and international news, and the latter was only covered by male reporters, since it was regarded as a male field (see Table 2).

Table 2. Gender typing in the news, 1965-2003 (percentage)

Type of news	1965		1975		1985		1995		2000-2003	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Hard War, Business, politics	9	52	28	71	67	65	54	60	58	74
Soft social issues, environment education, childcare	9	8	42	9	17	13	22	15	24	11
Sport, accidents and crime	15	26	17	15	5	12	15	19	11	12
Culture, entertainment Human interest, etc	67	14	13	5	11	10	9	6	7	4
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Number of items	33	355	64	658	914	2028	415	883	259	548

The absence of women and the gender typing was also distinctive in the news output: women as sources amounted to 10 per cent and the women interviewed were mainly 'common people' or celebrities. As official sources (experts, politicians etc.) women were completely invisible during the first ten years of television news broadcasting (see Table 3). The space for women both as journalists and interviewees was narrowed down in similar patterns. Television news constituted a new form of public sphere, where gender expectations resulted in a distinct gender typing: women mainly covered issues framed as private matters (human interest and family issues) and were mainly interviewed as private persons or celebrities, while male reporters covered issues framed as public affairs and men were mainly interviewed as citizens (Löfgren-Nilsson, 2009).

Table 3. Female sources in the news 1958-2003 (percentage)

Year	1958	1965	1975	1985	1995	2000/2003
Total %	11	10	11	15	31	25
Ordinary people	20	25	40	42	47	43
Celebrities	43	22	10	13	30	29
Representatives*	3	2	8	11	26	18
Others	0	10	2	16	12	20

*People representing authorities and other organizations as spokesmen or experts.

The existing gender expectations within the news department were based on a notion of gender as sex-stereotyped biology. The horizontal and vertical gender differentiation was very strong. There were believed to be 'natural' differences between men and women, where men would be assigned to 'male' tasks and positions and women to 'female' tasks and positions. For example,

women generally were recruited as secretaries and script girls (some of them later advanced and worked as producers) while the men were employed as reporters and editors: the positions and news areas given to men were associated with higher status and power. Female reporters were generally expected to support and complement male reporters' coverage of 'important' news, with entertaining news stories and news of interest to women and thereby providing a female perspective.

Judging from interviews and documents there seem to have been no conflicts around gender issues at this time. Discussions about female journalism and news values were absent and the news regime was not questioned: it seems like the female journalists worked hard just to fit in. One of the female reporters who worked at *Aktuellt* during the sixties described the situation as:

The concept of gender equality was not invented during my time /.../ as a young and inexperienced girl you had to bite the bullet, act tough, never ask for advice or try to change things. I have a memory hard to forget: when working as a news anchor I suggested that I wanted to be a reporter and a male colleague told me, 'You will never be able to do that, don't you understand that.' He was an exception; however he represents the enormous mental distance between then and today.

Although the female journalists had to work hard, they at the same time felt rather unique as they were few and pioneers. In an article in the national tabloid *Aftonbladet*, 'The girls at *Aktuellt*' were described as 'young modern women, who have advanced into important management positions (producers) and other positions filled with responsibility – among other things in hard competition with male colleagues' (*Aftonbladet* 19/3 1968).

Fighting for air – 1965-1985

When a second public service channel, TV2, was launched in 1969, it brought on one of the largest recruitment drives undertaken by Swedish media: 260 journalists were recruited to work for the new channel (Engblom 1998). The news magazine *Rapport* aired in 1969 and the news agenda changed dramatically in both news rooms. Human interest and culture became almost invisible and the focus was put on hard news (politics, labour market). Several new areas and beats were also introduced in the news, for instance, environmental reporting and consumer issues.

The new reporters at *Rapport* were handpicked, and gender was not considered an important issue in the recruitment process. At the start 20 per cent of the new staff were female and the amount of women also increased to 20 per cent at *Aktuellt*. However, four years later the figure had once again dropped to 13 per cent and consequently the amount of stories produced by women

dropped to around 10 per cent. In both news rooms, the specialist reporters in the economic, foreign affairs and political divisions were all men. News room managers and almost all of the specialized reporters were men. For the first time, however, a woman headed the political division at *Rapport* and she was the first female news room manager to be appointed.

There were also significant gender differences regarding story assignments throughout the 1970s, with female reporters often assigned to social and consumer news, while men almost exclusively covered foreign affairs and politics. In 1975 the gender differences in the coverage of topics such as war and international news and politics (male dominance), and social/consumer issues and environmental news (female dominance) was particularly strong. The gender typing within the news room was also reflected in the news output in terms of interviews; in 1970 11 per cent of the interviews were with women, the same amount as in the early days of *Aktuellt*. And likewise female interviewees were mainly 'common people' and celebrities.

As shown, the gender typing was marked by a strong horizontal and vertical gender differentiation at both *Rapport* and *Aktuellt*. However, the gender expectations that dominated during the sixties were no longer taken for granted among female journalists, and in 1976 June Carlsson commented upon the situation in the employee newsletter:

The editorial leadership at the news programme Aktuellt consists of men. Programme directors and other editorial chiefs are men, foreign and domestic reporters are men. Are there then no female reporters at Aktuellt? Of course – secretaries, script girls, producers and five female reporters. And what do they do? Well, they deal with medicine, the environment, housing, family, social and children's issues. Just like at home, one might say. Issues that don't have the same status as foreign policy, the labour market and business.

The situation gave fuel to a long and heated debate on gender issues. It took off in the early 1970s and gradually the intensity grew. The first 'women's ombudsman' was selected by the union at SVT during the autumn 1973. Her assignment was unspecified although she was recommended to 'gather women in smaller groups to enable everybody to air their problems'.⁶ Judging from the protocols the main problems considered up until 1975 was wages, childcare and attitudes towards woman. At *Rapport*, female reporters expressed fear of speaking out and asserting their views. 'In particular this occurred on the daily editorial meeting. The ombudsman would visit more times and also attend a meeting. The girls were happy someone visited them.'⁷ A female reporter working during the first years of *Rapport* described the situation as follows:

The male competitiveness worked the same way at Rapport as in other places, maybe fuelled by an extreme competitiveness from the start, since we were

very few journalists and chosen because we were considered to be the 'hot shots'. Male competition was huge and they considered us four girls as their prey – easy to kill.

However, changing attitudes towards female journalists and with it improvement of the working climate was only one of the strategies used. The starting point for formally organized gender equality campaigns within SVT was 1975 (Abrahamsson, 1991) and gender typing is mentioned in the documents for the first time. After a seminar on gender issues in December 1975 the following statement was made by the attendees:

We require that the management at SVT and SR within two years make sure that the appointments as news anchors will be fairly distributed among men and women. The ruling guideline should be that women anchor at least 40 per cent of the programmes, based on the running time. /.../ This measure only constitutes a first step in a radical change and therefore we demand that the management actively engage in the recruitment of more women for education and appointments so that the gender distribution will be more fair on all levels.⁸

Within the news rooms, this second strategy meant that women should enter previously male-dominated news areas and should receive the same status as men. Furthermore the so called soft news should increase and receive the same status as hard news. Thirdly, the amount of female sources should increase and gender-typing within the news programmes should decrease.

Inside the news rooms the focus on hard news was questioned by female journalists. They demanded a change of the profile and content with more attention on soft news (childcare, consumer issues and environmental issues). While some of the male managers supported the fight for gender equality and to some extent a change in programme profiles, the resistance, both active and passive, seems to have dominated. Among some of the male reporters, the focus on soft issues was considered as campaign journalism, the pedagogical way of telling stories (sometimes for up to eight minutes) was perceived as conflicting with both the focus on hard news and the professional ideal of a neutral journalism reflecting society. Some of the internal conflicts reached national media: 'We are harassed by our male colleagues' was the headline in the tabloid Aftonbladet in April 1978 and the two female managers at *Aktuellt* and *Rapport* described the situation as 'Slander and deviltry every day, That's what it's like to be a female manager.' The article describes the passive resistance towards new ideas from female journalists, the sexist jargon and nicknames such as 'childcare-Lindgren' and 'women's lib-Lindgren', the two latter aiming at the female managers' wish to change the news agenda and to increase the quota of female interviewees.

Nevertheless the female journalists gradually managed to find a new space for women in the news; the coverage of social issues and environmental issues gradually increased during the period, particularly at *Aktuellt*, and became female areas in the sense that they were covered by female reporters. In their second quest, to increase the amount of female sources, women reporters were less successful; the proportion never reached more than 11 per cent despite all the efforts made to improve the news in this respect.

During the 1970s the female reporters gradually became a group big enough to challenge the gender order in the news room. The level of activism was high, supported by trends in the surrounding society. In 1973 the “delegacy for equality” was instituted by the government, and in almost every newsroom gender issues was on the agenda. ‘We were not alone, you know, the whole women’s movement flourished around us. /.../ So you got inspiration from many people and their actions’ (female journalist working at *Rapport* during the 1970s). Formal equality work was also carried out within the company and the news rooms, networking and advocacy in other media became common strategies.

Inside the news room the dominant view was, however, that female reporters were supposed to be the ordinary woman’s representative, and it was no longer only human interest, culture and entertainment that were assigned to them. The gender order was somehow contradictory; it highlighted the similarities between the sexes and but at the same time the importance of the unique female experience was emphasized. The female journalists had to negotiate with the dominating news regime which focused on hard news. They followed two paths: one group chose (or was forced to) become ‘one of the girls’ and fought for the female perspective, meaning they tried to get social issues and female sources into the news. The other group tried to fight their way into the dominant news agenda by becoming ‘one of the boys’, claiming their right to cover hard news. Some of them succeeded and the gender typing gradually decreased as a result.

Almost equal? – 1985-1995

In 1983 the work carried out during the 1970s to achieve gender equality was evaluated by the gender equality committee at SVT. The report concluded that much effort had been put into education and advocacy, however very few concrete effects were to be seen, neither in terms of positions, nor in the programme output (Some things have happened, 1984). However, inside the news departments things had started to change and the fight for equality showed several effects. In 1985 the amount of women at *Aktuellt* had grown to 45 per cent. The departments for domestic and foreign news were gender balanced. At *Rapport* the proportion of women amounted to 29 per cent. One of the reasons for the difference between *Aktuellt* and *Rapport* was that at *Ak-*

tuellt, equality and gender issues were taken very seriously by the managing editors and directors (who were all men at the time). *Aktuellt* was competing with audience-leading *Rapport* and to reach a broader and female audience with the help of more female reporters became important. The increase can therefore be seen both as a competitive strategy and an awareness of gender equality policy ambitions. Another reason was that *Aktuellt* was expanding and therefore positions could be filled with women without causing much friction. The female reporters at *Aktuellt* showed interest in gender issues, however, they did not have to fight so hard for them (Boethius 1983).

At *Rapport* the situation was opposite; the management showed less interest in gender issues, the female reporters fought hard for gender equality and tried to change the news agenda. Thus the gender conflicts were more explicit, both in terms of the news agenda and the appointments. One of the deepest conflicts occurred at *Rapport* when a male journalist was appointed as manager, and the female journalists and some of the men considered the female candidate to be more suitable.

The late 1980s and early 1990s also represents the period when several female journalists were recruited into higher senior executive positions such as news directors and chief editors. In 1988, the first female chief editor was recruited at *Rapport*, Ewonne Winblad, and the public service broadcasting corporation turned out to be much more successful during the years to come in their recruitments of female managers than other media companies. They held a much higher rate of senior managers than the local and metropolitan press (Petersson et al 1996).

Gender typing in both newsrooms continued to narrow down on the vertical level and during this period there were no visible signs of gender differences in story assignments. Furthermore; the efforts to include more female sources in the news showed some results. Special lists with female experts were compiled and the amount of female interviewees gradually grew and peaked in 1995, when 30 per cent of the interviewed persons were female. Among politicians and authorities 30 per cent were women. During this period women became more visible as representatives for different parts of public life in society, although men still heavily dominated. The only category that reached gender balance was "ordinary people" where women in 1995 constituted 45 per cent of the interviewees.

The gender order in the newsroom was mainly based on a notion of gender that presupposed the similarity of the sexes. While gender issues during the 1970s caused conflicts, the norm now had become consensus and full agreement upon the fact that gender was an important issue when producing news. Furthermore the expectations on gender equality were high in both news rooms and in the surrounding society. It was considered very important for a company working in the service of the public among the employees, among politicians

and among viewers. In 1995 SVT received an award for their new equality plan. The plan contained measurable goals for instance that percentage of men or women never should be less than 40 per cent. It was furthermore stated that: 'Every time a male expert, commentator or in other sense well known person is discussed for potential use in a program, the editors are responsible for trying to find an equal (female) alternative. When programs are evaluated, gender equality shall always be an aspect.'

Although the relationship between men and women was much more consensual than in the 1970s, gender issues still sometimes caused controversy. And even though gender issues were considered to be important there were two assumptions, more or less clearly articulated. Firstly the female managers were supposed to take extra responsibility and in discussions about the underrepresentation of female sources this becomes evident in the interviews:

With all the female managers we recruited You would think that the problem should have been solved. Unfortunately, that is not the case (senior manager)

Secondly, due to the progress made and the high awareness of gender issues there was also a conviction that the remaining problems would solve themselves and attention turned to a more acute problem, the lack of representation in terms of ethnicity. The 1980s is consequently described in the interviews as the decade of 'true equality' within the news rooms at SVT. In 1990 the Gender Equality Committee at SVT concluded 'In light of the expected and gradually increasing share of female reporters, we consider this profession gender neutral' (Abrahamsson, 1990, p. 27) – a prediction that was not fulfilled, since the proportion of women instead began to decline at *Aktuellt*.

During the late 1980s the situation had gradually started to change at *Aktuellt*. The working climate changed and once again the prestigious domestic group successively became dominated by men. Several male managers were recruited and in the interviews female journalists describe the situation as old patterns that surfaced again:

A: All of a sudden there was this old boys' network again.

Q: How could this happen?

A: Well you wonder, you really do, and the management did let it happen. And the women started to leave.

Q: How did the women that stayed act?

A: Well, they tried to handle their work, insofar the guys didn't steal the assignments from them.

During this period several female reporters (and some male) left *Aktuellt*. Some of them went to TV4, a commercial channel that started in 1992, some went

on to other assignments within SVT as they experienced the managements as less in favour of female journalists and a new climate where discussions were 'killed'. The amount of women declined: in 1995 37 per cent of the staff was female. *Rapport* showed a similar development, during the late 1980s the news room was gender balanced but then the amount of women declined and in 1995 it was 32 per cent.

Backlash? – 2000-2003

During the late 1990s the political and financial pressure on the public broadcasting corporation was heavy. The news department was subject to several reorganizations and suffered from a lack of financial resources. Gender inequality (in terms of gender balance vertically and horizontally) had gradually ceased during the late 1980s and early 1990s and was therefore considered as non-problematic. The development was regarded as positive and the remaining imbalance was considered to be solved automatically by time and by a new generation. Women were far from constituting 50 per cent, but those who were there held positions and had status in the news room.

After a long and rather intense debate, among both politicians and co-workers, in 2000 SVT started a centralization process and reorganized the news department. The two news desks of *Rapport* and *Aktuellt* became one central desk, SVT News. *Aktuellt* kept eight earmarked reporters and the rest of the staff were reassigned to the new desk, providing news the two remaining news casts, *Rapport* and *Aktuellt*.

The new organization led to an unclear decision-making process; a complicated process with more people involved at different levels (Löfgren-Nilsson, 2007). In this situation the news process was harder to monitor and so was the gendered nature of it. Inside the SVT news room the image of morning meetings as a place where assignments are distributed was still alive. In reality this was hardly the case anymore. Most of the planning and assignments took place in personal meetings, either a day ahead, or during the same day.

In 2001, the female domestic reporters at the central news desk amounted to 43 per cent. The distribution of male to female reporters in the spring of 2003 was 50/50 and in the autumn 2003 it was 60/40. SVT News became once again gender neutral in the sense that neither gender dominated the reporter group.

In the top positions and among editors there was also gender balance. SVT News had six editors, three male and three female. Among the so-called 'planners' (intake) there was also a gender balance. There were two programme heads, one male at *Rapport* and one female at *Aktuellt*. The head of the news department was a woman.

Despite the gender balance, gender-typing increased within SVT News, particularly in the social issues area, which once again became the women's

territory while men managed the political news. The share of news production by women remained at one-third. The prestigious group of specialist reporters covering politics, business and the labour market was dominated by men (7 out of 8 reporters) and the foreign news department was once again dominated by men, partly as a consequence of the changes taking place at *Aktuellt* earlier described. Furthermore, the share of female sources in the news declined to 24 per cent (especially female politicians and female experts became rarer). So SVT News was once again back to the gender typing that existed during the 1970s regarding assignments, but not positions. Gender once again became 'problematic' and a topic in discussions inside SVT News.

The gender order in the newsroom during the early 2000s was in several ways contradictory and there was a strong ambivalence about gender issues. Despite the gender-typing of assignments, which was well known to all journalists at SVT News, both men and women stressed that the journalistic profession, in terms of professional identity and central values, should be, and also mainly was, gender neutral. At the same time gender was clearly an issue, and news value was, as in the 1970s, discussed in terms of hard, soft and status. A quote from a female journalist can serve as an illustration of this ambivalence:

Q: But is there anything, when age, background and different experiences [are taken into account], is there anything left that can be labelled masculine and feminine within journalism?

A: For political reasons my answer is NO! I refuse to admit that (big laugh).

However later on when trying to explain the gender typing the same female journalist continues:

And then it's about the topics we chose, we don't do politics, business news, labour market and spot news. That's what gets priority in Rapport. So if you chose to cover social issues, education or whatever – you will be placed further down. And culture... we don't do that stuff here any longer. And those jobs are the ones thrown out if something has to be excluded from the news cast.

Among some of the male journalists the same ambivalence could be noted; they concluded that there was no gender symbolism in terms of topics, and at the same time some of them expected the female managers to change the news content into more soft news and more female sources:

Well, it's not frequent but you hear it sometimes, this muttering in the corridors about the female mafia and how they will change the news into a female territory.

The news room was also marked by a very distinctive set of gender expectations identified in the different ways male and female journalists were perceived to cope with the requirements of the news room:

A: I believe there is a difference, but not between all guys and all women. But generally you can say that there is a masculine way of working here, concordant to the news flow, not all women chose it. Women might chose to sit and work a bit longer on – say medical care and ... other subjects. But the hot stuff, the main news stories at Rapport are seldom medical research and that kind of stuff, it's spot news. And I think the guys have a better understanding of that.

Q: They stay in the front line?

A: Yes, that's always the case, it has to be in all organizations. Even though there are a lot of people working here, still some are much better than others. And the editors trust them. And in our world when there is time pressure you choose those you can trust. And it's the same people and it's mostly guys. And to get editors to try someone else: 'Try another person, they exist', it takes time. /.../ We work against this pattern, definitively. And I don't hold it against those guys because they are quite good, but there is such a pattern.

The quote above does not only express the view that gender typing was caused by different orientations among men and women (news hounds/ pedagogues, hard news/soft news), it also exposes gender expectations prevailing in the news room; male journalists were perceived as reliable and it was considered a greater risk to send out a more inexperienced woman than a man. Furthermore women were perceived as passive and men as active. Beside these two dichotomies a third one was put forward: women were perceived as insecure and cautious/hesitating while men, on the other hand, were considered as straight on and never hesitating, they would 'grab the ball and run' without any questions (Löfgren-Nilsson 2010).

The gender expectations were spread among both male and female journalists/editors and were widely used to explain the gender typing. Among those who embraced them as essentialist female journalists constituted a problem. Strategies were launched among female and male managers to teach women to choose topics strategically, to behave strategically towards editors and learn 'male' conversational norms. In this way the problems experienced by female journalists and the gender typing were traced back to, and explained by, women's lack of competence and knowledge, located in their own behaviour, rather than in the organization and the gender symbolism. However, the gender expectations were opposed by many female reporters (especially among those who tried to work their way into hard news), who put the responsibility on the management.

In the following quote a journalist questions the 'idea' of female journalists being passive in discussing a situation where another female, an expert on foreign affairs, felt she had been passed over.

Well I know she was upset earlier this week because she (an editor) said to her, 'You have to grab the ball'. What kind of a fucking signal is that! It has to be

the editors in charge of the show who choose. And that Saturday morning I was here helping out, when the crisis broke out in Iraq, and the first thing I said was, 'Where is XXX? Call XXX, she knows about this'. But then they brought in a male journalist who sat there on air totally confused. And then I ask myself: How is she supposed to grab a ball when none are thrown out? Is she supposed to walk in during a live broadcast news show and lift him out of his chair?

So to conclude; while the profession on the one hand was considered to be gender neutral, the gender typing along with the fact that female journalists provided no more than a third of the news gave rise to a new debate and a new set of gender expectations. At SVT News in the early 2000s both male and female journalists and editors to some extent acted upon the perceived gender expectations. Gender stereotypes worked as a subtle mechanism of selection and also self-selection in the news room.

Negotiating gendered symbolism in the news room

Various definitions of gender symbolism within journalism have been suggested by focusing on different aspects of news values and news work (Creedon 1989; Djerf-Pierre & Löfgren-Nilsson 2004; Gallagher 1995; Löfgren-Nilsson 2000; Melin-Higgins 1995,1996; Savolainen 1992; van Zoonen 1998a, 1998b; Zilliacus-Tikkanen 1997). They can be summarized as follows:

masculinity

Hard news
Public sphere
News hounds
Male sources
and perspectives

femininity

Soft news
Private sphere
Pedagogues
Female sources
and perspectives

The first aspect of gender symbolism within journalism – and probably the most intensely debated issue – deals with the topics and issues covered, i.e. the selection of news. Here, the distinction is usually made between soft and hard news, although opinions differ on how 'soft' and 'hard' should be defined. The label 'soft news' is often used when referring to news about social issues, consumer issues, health care, education, child care, the environment, and housing. But sometimes also human interest, culture, and entertainment are included when defining news as 'soft'. Hard news, on the other hand, usually refers to politics, business news, labour issues, and war, but sometimes also to technology, science, crime and sport news. The logic is derived from the view that women and men to some extent have different beliefs about what are important (and therefore newsworthy) public issues. Hard news includes issues believed to be important to men because they relate to spheres in which

men dominate, such as politics, the economy, and business. Soft news includes issues related to social spheres where women traditionally dominate such as health care, education, child care, and where they are defined as consumers (consumer news).

When *Aktuellt* started in 1958, soft news had its place within the news. In the middle of the 1960s the news agenda changed and since then hard news has dominated, even though attempts were made to change the news agenda during the 1970s. As a consequence female journalists have had to negotiate with the dominant and masculine construction of journalism. In earlier research several strategies used by women to negotiate have been pointed out (Eegsmoose 1993; van Zoonen 1998a; 1998b; Zilliacus & Tikkanen 1997). The first has been described by van Zoonen (1998b) as choosing to be a 'marionette'. The marionette accepts the role given to her as a 'woman journalist'. This can be said to have been the most common path for women journalists during the first years of *Aktuellt*, when female journalists accepted the topics given to them, and their place as providers of news of interest to women, although these stories counted less and later on disappeared when *Aktuellt* changed the news agenda.

During the 1970s a second strategy became common, a strategy quite in opposition with the dominating news agenda. A majority of female journalists at *Rapport* and some at *Aktuellt* chose to become 'one of the girls' and in doing so they challenged the focus on hard news and managed to change the coverage by introducing social issues and environmental issues into the news. As shown earlier, challenging the dominant news agenda caused reactions and counterstrategies by male colleagues, mainly in the form of harassment. Networking and advocacy in the national media became important tools for the female journalists during the whole of the 1970s and early 1980s.

While some of the female journalists tried to challenge the existing news agenda others chose to challenge the gender typing by stepping into masculine territory. They claimed their right to cover hard news, to anchor news casts and to hold management positions, sometimes with equality as an argument. Gradually the acceptance for 'girls' entering 'boys' territory grew and, as shown above, the gender order in terms of gender typing was broken in the middle of the 1980s. As the strategy to become one of the boys did not challenge the prevailing news order, this strategy was easier (although not easy) than choosing to become one of the girls.

As shown, gender typing started to increase again during the late 1990s. Discussions about gendered news values were raised again, although attempts had been made to change the news agenda at *Rapport*, since the news cast was considered by many as 'hard news for middle aged, white men'. Female reporters at the central news desk perceived the possibilities to become one of the girls and raise the status of soft news as quite limited since soft news

did not qualify as specialized beats. Instead many of them chose to fight the gendered hierarchy by trying to get into hard news and becoming one of the boys. Both more openly declared and more hidden strategies to get women into foreign news and the prestigious group that covered politics, economics and the labour market were present, aiming to increase the share of hard news covered by women. Once again organized networking among female journalists became central; however, instead of using national media, female journalists conducted their own investigations in the form of surveys and content analysis in order to demonstrate the 'backlash'.

Since an open strategy to become one of the girls did not seem to work at the time, a fourth strategy was also applied. A quote from a female journalist who was just about to become a specialized political reporter illustrates this strategy:

Well I felt that I was treading water as a non-specialized reporter. And that only politics and economics count as specialized beats with some kind of status. ././ I have mostly done integration, social issues and women's issues. Much of it is political questions and I thought that I would like to cover the same issues but from a political angle, what goes on in the parliament. Then you will get a newsworthy book, one that counts. Instead of rounding up the news cast with a 'softie', you get closer to the top of the list and it might also improve the work I do. I think it's a wise strategy.

'Female' journalism has also been associated with a personal engagement and empathy for the people covered in the news, trying to respond to the interests of the audiences and prioritizing female sources and perspectives. Male journalism, on the other hand, has been seen to be neutral, distancing and impartial, detached from the audience. Furthermore; female journalism tends to emphasize the bigger picture and context, while male journalism reports on isolated incidents and facts. While male journalism is seen to be about hunting down news and immediately presenting it ('newshounds'), female journalism is seen as gathering information and presenting it in a pedagogical way after first providing a basis for understanding ('pedagogues').

It is clear that from the 1970s and on there have been tensions and discussions on how to report the news. The attempt made by female journalists to change the news agenda during the 1970s included introducing not only new forms of soft news and raising their status, but also new styles of reporting. The aim for many female journalists was to explain and contextualize the news (one single news feature could last for 5-8 minutes) and they aspired to the ideal of a journalists being a pedagogue, while their male counterparts mainly aspired to a newshound ideal. This reporting style was questioned and in the 1970s many male reporters considered this kind of news as campaign news. Even though the news agenda and the professional ideals to some extent have varied

over time and within the two news rooms, the space for journalism driven by pedagogical ideals has been larger at *Aktuellt*, which to some extent explains why female journalists generally have experienced less resistance at *Aktuellt* than at *Rapport*, where the ideal of newshounds dominated. In the early 2000s this was still an issue among female journalists who felt that the possibilities to make 'pedagogical news' had narrowed down to almost none in *Rapport*.

Turning to the last aspect of gender symbolism, sources, it is quite obvious that the masculine logic has dominated during all periods. Male sources have always dominated the news agenda. However female journalists have prioritized female sources more highly than male journalists have; no matter what topic they covered their quota was higher than among male journalists. Interestingly enough this difference disappears in the early 2000s, parallel with the general decline of female sources down to 25 per cent. While the gender symbolism in terms of news values and reporting styles mainly has been questioned by female reporters the dominance of male sources was in the early 2000s regarded as a problem by all journalists and the management. Action proposals were developed and a few years later the share of female sources had increased slightly.

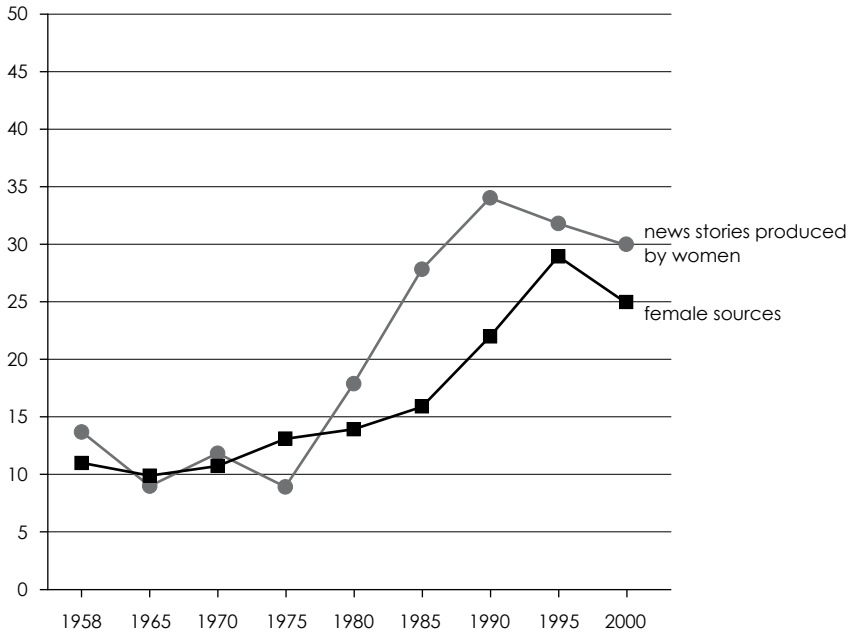
Conclusion

This chapter has presented an analysis of gendering processes in news reporting. There have been significant changes in the gendered aspects of the news since the start of television in 1956. The number of female reporters and editors has increased considerably over time. The biggest advances for women in journalism occurred between 1980 and 1985. Gender typing in the newsrooms has decreased over the period, although a backlash can be noted in SVT around 2000.

It is clear that the gender order of the newsrooms has been founded on very diverse gender expectations, from the essentialist view in the 1950s, where the different genders were supposed to exist in complementary harmony, to the constructivist perspective in the 1970s, where patriarchy was challenged and the relation between men and women was seen as one of conflict, subordination and domination. During the 1980s and 1990s the order was mainly based on gender expectations that presupposed the similarity of sexes and the awareness of gender equality was high. Around 2000 the gender order was in many ways contradictory and when gender typing resurfaced a set of essentialist gender expectations was applied to explain the situation.

However, no matter the gender symbolism and gender expectation within the news rooms and at the news desks; up until 2003 women never managed to produce more than one-third of the news stories aired and female interviewees

Figure 1. The share of news produced by women and the share of female sources in SVT news



have remained around 30 per cent. Although the absence of women both on and off screen was regarded as unproblematic during the first years of broadcast news it has become a rather problematic issue in the 2000s. Television as a discursive practice provides a major force in the production of images of men and women and their place in the public sphere. In its essence, journalism is a matter of choice and when the public sphere is reproduced in the form of television news men still dominate the scene. For a public broadcasting corporation this is highly problematic, not least because its mission includes core values such as democracy, diversity and equality.

Notes

1. Anette Kullenberg, *Aftonbladet* 2 April 1978.
2. <http://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2012>.
3. The 'odd' year 1968 is included because it was the last year of *Aktuellt* and the single channel system, before the start of the second television channel in 1969, in the analysis.
4. This second survey was carried out inside SVT by a group of female journalists on their own initiative and the author was given permission to access the data.
5. For further remarks on methodology see Löfgren-Nilsson, 2009 and 2010.
6. Letter from Marianne Börje and Marie-Louise Selander to Maria (no last name stated in the protocol), 1976-06-30. T55. F2:1.

7. Protocol from a meeting with the women's ombudsman, 1976-03-31. T55 F2:1.
8. Percept from the participants at a programme policy seminar, 1975-12-02. T 55 F2:1.

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Chapter 9

Enter the Professionals

Shifting logics of election broadcasts in Sweden

Peter Esaiasson & Nicklas Håkansson

Introduction

Once upon a time politics was the idiomatic elephant in the living room: evident, but far too controversial for public service broadcasting. In the early days of Swedish radio history political matters other than merely ceremonial events like state visits and the official opening of the Riksdag (Swedish Parliament) were simply not reported on. The situation has been radically different for a long time, however. For decades we have expected public service broadcast media to provide the foremost channels when it comes to political information and debate. Mediatization and similar concepts are often used to grasp the development leading to the present dominant role of the media in political communication. We claim one condition to be of particular importance for coverage of current affairs in public service broadcasts: the introduction in the 1960s of active and professional journalists in public service broadcasting.

Research on the relations between politics and journalism in the western world has provided fairly unanimous evidence of the increasing power of the latter at the expense of the former. Independent professional journalists have gained in importance as definers of the political world in the minds of people. Political actors cannot, as in earlier days, rely on their version of reality being the one the public adheres to (see, among others, Blumler & Kavanagh 1999; Brants & Voltmer 2011; Graber, McQuail & Norris 2008; Hallin & Mancini 2004; Patterson 1993). The changes have been discussed in terms of mediatization, a broader term for effects on society of media developments (Asp 1986; Hjarvard 2008; Lundby 2009) and more specifically as a shift in the logic of political communication, from a party logic to a media logic (Mazzoleni 1987; Meyer & Hinchman 2002; see also Brants & Van Praag 2006). A precondition for a media logic to be dominant and necessary for all political communicators to adapt to is that the media and its staff act independently of other social institutions. A road to media independence, in turn, is professionalization of media occupations such as journalism.

The case in focus in our study comprises political broadcasts in Sweden. Swedish media and journalism show several typical traits in relation to the general picture. In the oft-cited typology by Hallin and Mancini (2004), Sweden belongs to the democratic-corporatist model of combined media and political systems. This is characterized by historically strong ties between political parties and the press (political parallelism), a high degree of professionalization of journalism, strong state intervention for the protection of press freedom, and a strong position for public service broadcasting. In this respect, Sweden shares many traits with other northern and western European countries. Trends like professionalization are also very general in nature, spanning nations, media systems and media types. Moreover, as Hallin and Mancini note, there is an ongoing convergence among media systems, where liberal ideas and commercialization are on the rise, making differences between media and between countries grow smaller. Swedish media should be no exception to these trends.

We argue that the shift of communication logics that follows professionalization of journalism manifests itself in the broadcasts in radio and television. In our study we wish to make a specific and targeted contribution to this research, examining the introduction of professional political journalists in the particular genres of the public service media that taken together comprise the radio and television broadcasts of Sveriges Radio (SR) preceding elections (henceforth: election specials). Just as we consider Sweden as typical in that its media logic and professional journalism have emerged as in other western countries, we can regard Swedish election specials as particular in an international comparison. As discussed below, Sweden was a pioneering country, introducing election debates on radio as early as 1932. As for television, a long debate tradition started in 1960, actually a few months before the well known US 'Great Debates'. The institution of Swedish election broadcasts can therefore be studied over a long time period.

The objective of this chapter is twofold. First, we will give an account of how control over the election specials was brought about and how it has varied over time from their introduction in the 1930s to the present day. Second, we will assess whether journalistic control makes a difference for how participants interact with each other in the broadcasts. From conversation analysis (CA) we borrow the idea that strategies for opportunities to speak and for 'keeping the floor' can be seen as expressions of dominance and power (see for example Beattie 1982). This part of the study is therefore designed as a test of whether a systematic and tangible power shift in the televised discourse has occurred.

As we shall see below, a decisive change in the conditions for election special broadcasts occurred from 1966 onwards when professional journalists were granted control of the agenda of the highly prestigious interviews with party leaders in which previously politicians had been able to appear with a high degree of freedom. At the same time other programme formats and condi-

tions remained unchanged, and largely without active journalistic intervention. Therefore, we have a quasi-experimental situation allowing us to identify outcomes of this particular change: what difference do the professional journalists actually make? The long time frame included (1956-1998) will also cover other important events such as the transition of the election specials from radio to television in 1960, and external competition with commercial television (1990s).

The study consists of two parts. In the first part we provide a historical account covering the whole period of election specials from 1932 to 2010, in which the control over access to the programmes (who can join and on what conditions) and over formats (what kinds of broadcasts should be aired) are at the centre of attention. In the second part we turn to a content analysis of the specific consequences of journalistic control on the studio interaction between participants in the party leader interviews. Before entering these empirical sections we will elaborate somewhat on key concepts. Finally we present our conclusions and discuss the consequences of professional journalism for the type of information that reach citizens during election campaigns.

Professional journalism and the logics of broadcasts

Although there is debate over concepts like mediatization, there is ample empirical evidence that the centrality of the media to political communication has increased over time (see for example Brants & Van Praag 2006; Meyer & Hinchman 2002; Strömbäck & Esser 2009). The concepts *party logic* and *media logic* can be used to interpret the changes in conditions for politically oriented journalism. Introduced by Mazzoleni (1987) they pinpoint different logics guiding political communication, each emanating from a distinct sphere with its own rationality. Elaborating on the concepts, Meyer (2002) draws a sharp line between a logic of the political world and a logic of the media. Political logic consists of polity (the rules and norms), policy (finding solutions for common problems) and process (gaining acceptance). It is characterized by a need for deliberation and compromise as well as a generally slow pace in the making of politics. The media logic is based on the principles for selecting news and the inherent rules for presentation. In many respects, it is at odds with the political logic, as it demands drama, simplicity, and conflict (Meyer 2002). When media logic rules, the media constrain the choice sets of other actors as they have to adapt to the workings of the media in different respects (Sparrow 1999, p. 10).

The preponderance of media logic in turn may be explained by a range of factors, such as technological changes, commercialization and the evolution of independent, scrutinizing journalism (Hallin & Mancini 2004, p. 40). At least the latter is easily interpreted as part of a *professionalization* process. Professionalization, and professionalism, are general concepts developed by, among

others, Max Weber and Harold Wilensky, and denote a development that has taken place in many domains of society. The presence of a systematic body of knowledge or doctrine, formal (academic) education, strong professional associations, community sanctions and occupational monopoly are some of the more common ingredients in definitions of professions (Greenwood 1957; Wilensky 1964). While it is obvious that some of the general conditions for a profession are not met by journalism (no monopoly of tasks, no formal requirement of education etc.), many scholars draw attention to features that nevertheless give us reason to regard journalism as a profession (see, among others, Broddason 1994; Donsbach & Patterson 2004, pp. 260-262; Hallin & Mancini 2004, pp. 38-39;). Along with *autonomy and public service orientation* Hallin and Mancini (2004, pp. 34-37) emphasize *common norms* as distinctive features of professional journalism. In particular norms of objectivity and/or impartiality are often put forth as indicative of a professional journalism.

Schudson (2001) notes that the ideal of objectivity and neutrality in journalism first evolved in the USA, and only later became a defining feature of European journalism. In several European countries, Sweden included, strong ties between the political power and the newspapers may have delayed journalistic professionalization, although Hallin and Mancini (2004, p. 41) conclude that partisanship does not exclude professionalism. In the later part of the twentieth century professional norms tended to be embraced by print and broadcast journalists alike, regardless of whether they worked for private or public media (Donsbach & Patterson 2004; Hallin & Mancini 2004, pp. 177; Schudson 2003).¹

Although both tendencies toward media logic and professionalization point in the same direction for different media, some conditions specific to *broadcasting* are worth mentioning. First, the SR operates under public service rules; rules which constrain programme makers in certain aspects, at the same time as the particular demands of public service may form a driving force for making exactly what the term suggests: programmes in the service of the public. Second, professional norms and ideals of journalism are likely to take on particular expressions in the specific conditions of the programme genres in focus. For example, the fact that the election specials are broadcast live and involve live conversations may evoke tangible ideals about how to do high quality television conversations about politics.

Election specials as objects of study

In this chapter we focus on election specials, a particular form of political broadcast. The election specials form a regular feature of broadcasts in radio and television planned and aired before each general election. There are a number of reasons to make election broadcasts our object of study. First, the

centrality of elections both in our representative democracy and in political journalism: elections as events are always high-scorers on any news value scale. Moreover, television has since long been the most important source of election information for voters, and election broadcasts typically attract big audiences (Coleman 2000; Strömbäck & Nord 2008). Second, elections and their media coverage are recurrent phenomena which are particularly suitable for longitudinal studies such as ours. Third, as mentioned above, the fact that one crucial change – the journalists take control over party leader *interviews* – takes place while party leader *debates* remain in party control will allow us to assess the effect of just this aspect of professionalization of journalism.

Two main formats are in focus for our study: Broadcast *interviews of party leaders* form a particularly interesting subset of the election programming. Leader or candidate interviews is a widely used format in political communication (Clayman & Heritage 2002; Ekström 2001; Elliott & Bull 1996; Huls & Varwijk 2011). The format is attractive for politicians as it allows for more exposure and more elaborate messages than ordinary news interviews. On the other hand, interviews always pose a risk for the politician taking part. The latter gives up a great deal of the control over the outcome he or she would have in various other political communication channels, most notably advertisements and public speeches.

Party leader debates, the second format which we examine in this chapter, are also considered central in election campaigns. Mediated debates between the main contenders for power are regular elements in electoral campaigns in many countries, of which the American ‘Great Debates’ and the German *Elefantenrunden* are well known examples. These debates form part of the ritual of the election, with large audiences (Coleman 2000; Esaiasson 1990), as well as extensive media coverage (McKinney & Carlin 2004; Reinemann & Wilke 2007). For voters, debates may be at once informative, entertaining and promote interest in the election (Jamieson & Adasiewicz 2000; Martel 1983; McKinney & Carlin 2004).²

Swedish election specials: how they evolved and how power shifted

Now we turn to the story of how election specials were introduced in Sweden, and how they have changed over the years. The guiding idea is that control over access (who will be invited?), and the control over the programme format (what type of broadcasts? what conditions and rules for speech?), are important as indicators of the changing logics of the election specials. The account of the development of Swedish election specials is founded mostly on archival material from SR, and to lesser extent on interviews with journalists and officials of SR.³

The age of party control

The strict interpretation of the neutrality norms embedded in the public service ideal that SR made from its start in 1925 did not allow for political matters to be covered at all, not even as news items. This negative attitude toward politics was not only founded in the fear of breaking objectivity rules. In its paternalistic efforts to educate the public, SR also upheld an ideal of cultivation and good taste. Discussions on mundane political issues did not easily qualify as worthy of the new medium.

In the 1930s however, it was no longer feasible to keep politics out of the radio listings. When the SR leadership was asked by their board to arrange a 'political discussion' on radio shortly before the Riksdag election of 1932, the request was preceded by some pressure from their principals: the parties as well as the press. Informal talks led to an agreement with the political parties to air a debate on the economic crisis with prominent representatives, in this case the economic spokespersons, of all Riksdag parties a few evenings before the election day. As letting their own personnel take active parts in the programme was considered to break the neutrality principle, SR appointed a neutral public servant, the chairman of SR, Per Södermark, as moderator of the debate.

In terms of control this pioneering election debate – possibly the first election debate ever broadcast – gives a mixed picture. The parties were given generous conditions insofar as they gained a previously denied access to the airwaves. They were also involved from the start in discussions on the format and conditions for the broadcasts; discussions from which the chosen programme format can be seen as a compromise, acceptable for all parties. On the other hand, SR limited the freedom for the politicians in other respects: the participants were requested to hand in manuscripts in advance both to SR and to their fellow debaters. In addition, they were required to make an introductory as well as a concluding speech. Rather than being motivated by a wish to control the agenda, SR officials were eager to safeguard good taste and a cultivated tone in the broadcasts. An illustration of this paternalistic approach is found in a contemporary public commission report stressing the necessity that those speaking in radio keep to the issue and not be allowed to 'belie or discredit' anyone's views (Djerf Pierre & Weibull 2001, p. 57).

The format of the first debate was repeated prior to the local elections of 1934. This time, all parties were represented by their leaders, and the debate was no longer restricted to a topic, but devoted to 'the main question your party believes the elections should resolve'. The format of this debate turned out to be the model for all future final debates on SR for the rest of the twentieth century: a free agenda for the party representatives, and a passive chairperson whose main task was to keep track of time for questions and rejoinders from the participants. Time was allotted equally among the parties, but from 1948 the long-governing Social Democrats were granted an additional participant

in the debates, on the grounds that this overrepresentation would balance the otherwise massive challenges from the opposition parties.⁴ This arrangement was upheld, with some exceptions, in the final debates until 1991.⁵ Moreover, in 1936 a new format was introduced as the leader of each parliamentary party was allotted 40 minutes of free radio time to present the party's manifestos for the forthcoming elections.

From the first experiment with election specials in 1932 and up to the 1980s, the SR election coverage in radio and television was largely a result of more or less formal negotiations between SR officials and the leadership of the political parties. With one major exception, the access question was fairly uncontroversial from the start; all the parties represented in parliament were to be invited to the broadcasts. A delicate question, however, was the participation of the Communist party. The dilemma of SR was to honour the neutrality principle while at the same time preventing subversive and anti-democratic forces from propagating their messages.⁶ This dilemma was solved when the 'parliamentary representation principle' was finally established in 1946.⁷ However, some restrictions were placed on the Communists' participation; for example, their representatives were never allowed to appear unopposed, thus they could never speak last among the debaters. From 1952 the Communists were also excluded from any pre-election discussions between parties and SR (Elgemyr 2005)

In 1946 negotiations ended in a swap: party leader presentations were abolished and in came interviews in which journalists asked questions to the party leaders. Due to the neutrality principle, however, SR employees were not allowed to appear in the interviews. Instead, the interrogators were chosen from among partisan journalists (typically party press editors) nominated by each party. With five Riksdag parties, the interviews turned into a four-to-one confrontation, since, for the sake of balance, each party leader was matched against interviewers from all other parties. The loss of presentation programmes was a setback for the parties, but on the other hand the parties were granted control over the interviews that replaced them.

During the 1950s and 1960s a number of programme formats were introduced and in many cases subsequently abolished: e.g. short party presentations, phone-ins, and 'meet-the-audience'. The parties usually argued for formats which granted them as much free air time as possible: speeches and party presentations were at top of their wish lists. A recurring line of argument from the side of the SR, however, was that the broadcasts should be consistent with the somewhat elusive concept of 'good television'. Radio and television journalists of the early 1960s referred loosely to their wishes to make broadcasts with a faster pace, more spontaneity, and less monotonous and propagandistic talk from the side of the politicians. Here, the arguments of the SR journalists and producers highlight the peculiarities – and opportunities – of the medium in question. The concept of *liveness* captures some desirable features of the

live broadcasts: the aspiration on behalf of the audience to achieve a sense of presence in time and space, as well as a lively and exciting debate (Auslaner 2008; see also Corner 1995; Ekström & Berczes 2008). If this liveness was a preferred outcome for SR, the politicians were less concerned. Indeed, proposals from parties concerning the format and rules of the programming were sometimes discarded by SR as not meeting demands for 'good television'. The final mix of broadcasts was nevertheless decided in a give-and-take procedure. Initially, however, parties had possessed a veto against new broadcast formats, since SR deemed it impossible not to bring all the parties along. After all, the election specials were regarded as the parties' show, or, as the SR director put it 'the parties' channels for reaching the citizens' (Rydbeck 1990, p. 210). A slight power shift in favour of SR in this respect could be noted from around 1950. Now SR dared to override a single party making objections, and only stopped short of a unified front of parties against it. A road to increased journalist control had been opened.

The backbone of the broadcasts from the 1940s on consisted of two party-controlled formats: the final party leader debates and the series of interviews, where each party leader was interrogated by a line-up of representatives of the other Riksdag parties. The introduction of television in the second half of the 1950s did not change this model; the programme formats were simply transferred onto television. Thus, while the 1960 election is considered as the first 'TV election' – referring to the expected great interest for the televised election specials, political parties kept their own meeting arrangements to a minimum – the new and powerful media did not change the relationship between politicians and journalists in principle.

The age of journalist control

There were of course signs that a new era was dawning: the press, rather than the newer broadcast media, was the innovative driving force for change. A news ideal with Anglo-American roots and with focus on objectivity and neutrality, but also with ambitions of scrutiny, grew stronger. The party press was on the decline, a gradual professionalization was on its way. The early 1960s saw an inroad of the new journalism into public service broadcasting. Journalists characterized by a confrontational style in interviewing entered the stage, bringing an investigative and critical element to current affairs journalism. Djerf Pierre and Weibull (2001) state that professionalization is an important force of change between what they label the objectivism phase and its neutral, mirroring reporter ideal and the watchdog ideal of the critical scrutiny phase.

In the early 1960s SR was constantly seeking opportunities to make the election specials more interesting for their audience. One strategy was to suggest programme formats involving independent hosts or interrogators rather than

politically affiliated ones. As sufficiently independent journalists could be hard to find, an idea was to engage representatives of 'occupations with an interest in social life'. Teachers were mentioned as an example of a professional group suitable for the task. Although this idea never materialized, the example shows that SR did not yet dare to propose its own employees for the job.

In advance of the local elections in 1966 the SR leadership decided that time was ripe for assuming command over the interviews with the party leaders. The format where interviewing had been left in the hands of partisans nominated by the parties themselves had outlived itself. Although there was hesitance on the part of parties, partly due to experiences of a tougher scrutiny in other broadcasts, all the major parties accepted the idea. The interviews were to be conducted by three SR journalists, Gustaf Olivecrona, Åke Ortmark and Lars Orup (collectively labelled 'The Three Os' due to their initials), who were already renowned for their interviewing skills. The interview series was aired in the weeks preceding the election. The interview with Prime Minister Tage Erlander gained particular attention, as the prime minister had a hard time answering specific and detailed questions. His appearance was discussed as a contributing factor behind the historically low electoral result of the governing Social Democratic party.⁸ Despite this, the interview series was overall deemed a success both by parties and by SR.

In the decades that followed the two most important features of the election specials remained the same: final debates with a party controlled format, and the journalist-driven party leader interviews. On the whole however, it is clear that the journalistic control over the election broadcasts grew stronger. Three changes illustrate this. First, in the 1970s the principles giving all parties equal access were abandoned, and debates between two contending parties were launched, a fact that illustrates that news values were allowed to override impartiality. Second, the 1980s saw a number of election debates with special topics (e.g. economy, environment) with journalists setting the agenda; only the final debate remained party controlled until 1998. Third, the formal negotiations with the parties faded away during the eighties. From now on SR made decisions concerning election specials, to which they invited the party leaders. The decision to finally drop the stopwatch-style final debates was made after the 1998 elections when the debate was widely criticized for being tedious and outdated. After testing the new format, with two journalists introducing questions on pre-defined topics to the party leaders, in the 1999 European Parliament election debate, this kind of debate has been run in advance of each parliamentary election of the 2000s.

The recent history of Swedish election specials bears the mark of a fundamental fact: the SR is no longer the only player on the field. The commercial TV4 started as a satellite channel in 1990, but was licensed as a terrestrial channel in 1992. From the outset TV4 deployed an explicit strategy to make news and

current affairs broadcasts in a softer and more personalized style (Djerf Pierre & Weibull 2008). This style also made its way into the election programmes that TV4 has aired since 1994, and there is reason to believe that the experience of competition provided incentives for SR to modify its election specials.

To summarize: the period up to the 1966 elections is characterized by election specials with passive SR officials,⁹ relative freedom for the parties, and in terms of power a strong stance of the latter vis à vis the broadcasting corporation when negotiating the conditions of their participation. Just as was the case with Swedish press journalism in the era up to around 1960, with a partisan press and a high degree of political parallelism (Hallin & Mancini, 2004), its broadcast counterpart can be described as predominantly guided by political logic. The noticeably low profile of the SR in negotiations during the radio era as well as in the early days of television is a good illustration of this circumstance. The policy that prevented SR staff from taking an active part in the public affairs programming gave politicians a privileged position in the airwaves. Up to the mid-1960s the SR leadership acknowledged the right of the parties to influence the format of the specials with reference to public service broadcasting being a link from parties to voters.

The shift that took place during the 1960s when professional journalists took over the production of the election specials illustrates a transition from a party logic to a media logic of election broadcasting. The shift went hand in hand with a new interpretation of objectivity which allowed journalists to make judgements on what topics to focus on, what questions to ask, and how to do it. The accurate description of relevant and thus newsworthy events became more important than treating all actors equally, in other words: 'truth over impartiality' (Djerf Pierre & Weibull 2001). The critical outlook adopted by journalists at that time did not only imply a new way of looking at objectivity, but also an important step towards the autonomy that is crucial in professionalization. Now 'autonomy' was not supposed to be only freedom from influence of government and different interests, but also a right and an obligation for SR journalists to use professional judgement in determining which topics, perspectives and questions to bring up, and how to frame them.

Parallel to the reformulation of objectivity we find another expression of professionalized journalism: the wish to make 'good radio/television'. Even though the exact meaning of this concept is unclear, it illustrates that the media occupations are in a process of professionalization, and that judgements based on know-how (we know what a good TV show is!) become more important than serving the interests of parties. All in all these changes gave SR a stronger power versus the politicians, at a time when parties also became increasingly dependent on television in their campaigns (Esaiaasson 1991; Norris 2000). The advancement of SR's position was also facilitated by the inability of the political parties to unite against the journalistic innovations.

The relationship between journalists and politicians

To study how interactions between journalists and politicians have evolved during the periods of interest here, we focus on the interview programmes. As discussed above, in these programmes two or more interviewers question the leader of each significant party about matters of policy and political strategies. Since the basic features of the programmes have remained unchanged since the late 1940s, they offer a useful context for analysis of long-term changes in the relationship between journalists and politicians. In terms of research design, thus, we keep the institution (the interview programme) constant, and map variations in the conduct of actors within this institution.

Borrowing from conversation research, our interest is directed towards the moment in interviews when the right to speak moves from one part to the other (Atkinson & Heritage 1984; Clayman & Heritage 2002). These turn takings may occur voluntary, or after one person challenges the other through a simultaneous speech act, what in everyday parlance is known as 'interruption' (Beattie 1982; Ferguson 1977). Following previous research (e.g. Esaiasson & Moring 1994; Moring 1989; Nylund 1995), we consider the relative frequency of voluntary surrenders and challenges indicative of the relationship between journalists and politicians.

In particular, challenging turn takings – interruptions – are closely tied to the idea of critical journalism (Clayman et al, 2007; Djerf-Pierre in this volume; Greatbatch 1986). Simply put, according to the norms embedded in the critical scrutiny ideal truth seeking journalists must interrupt powerful politicians who, when allowed to speak freely during interviews, conceal information unfavourable for their own interests. More generally, in conversation analysis frequent challenges from one part often indicates an intention to dominate the relationship (e.g. Beattie 1982; Thornborrow 2002).

In the Swedish case, the introduction of an active and confrontational *skjutjärnsjournalistik* (literally, 'shotgun journalism') was hotly debated among SR employees during the early and mid-1960s. As discussed above, eventually a new generation of critical news journalists won out against the more traditional and cautious academically educated SR officials (Djerf-Pierre & Weibull 2001; 2008).¹⁰

The importance of turn-taking in the party leader interviews is confirmed by the protagonists themselves. For this research we conducted personal interviews with twelve of the twenty journalists who were involved in the election specials during the period of interest here. When asked about turn-taking, all of them acknowledged that the frequency of interruptions was a concern. Precisely, the dilemma for journalist interviewers was (and still is) to strike a balance between the need to control drifting interviewees, and the need to maintain a civil tone. In particular, given the strong norm of civility in human interactions

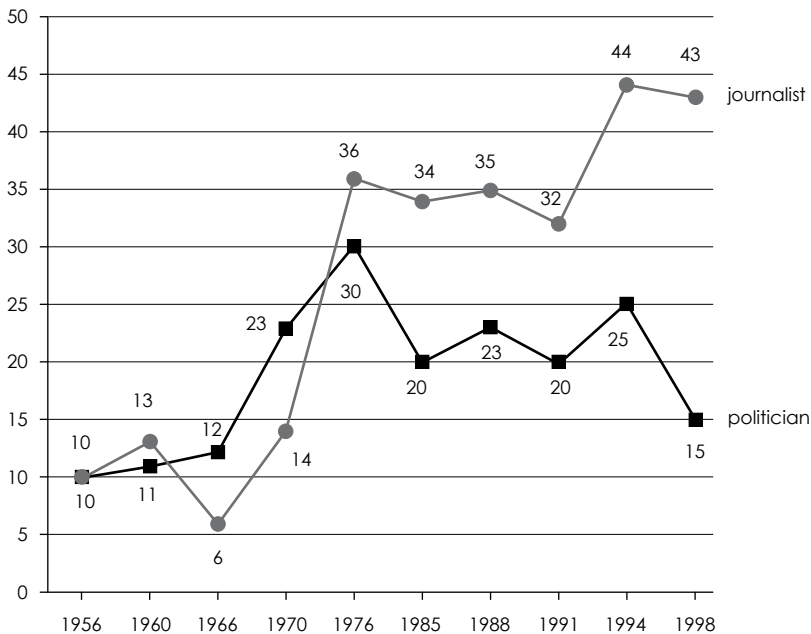
(e.g. Mutz & Reeves 2005), a multitude of interruptions is believed to generate 'sympathy transition' from journalists to politicians (cf. Ekström 2009).¹¹

Against this backdrop, we expect the system of turn-takings to change with the active role of journalists in the election specials. Specifically, we expect to observe an increase in challenged turn-takings in connection with the rise of professional journalism and the growing predominance of the media logic. A critical point should be the 1966 elections, when SR journalists for the first time took charge over the interviews.

Challenged turn takings

The cases selected for analysis are the party-run interviews in 1956 (radio broadcast) and 1960 (televised), the first journalist-run interviews in 1966, and interviews from seven more parliamentary elections from 1970 to 1998. In each of this total of 60 election specials we have registered all turn takings from one part to the other as either voluntary surrenders or challenges. When coding challenged turns, we have included successful interruptions (a speaker interrupts and takes over); successful completions (the turn is taken by a new speaker but the first speaker completes the turn begun); and attempts to interrupt (an unsuccessful attempt to interrupt, the first speaker keeps the turn). Figure 1 shows the percentage of challenged turns from one actor to the other at respective elections.

Figure 1. Proportion of Challenged Turns in Party Leader Interviews 1956-1998



Focusing first on the conduct of journalists, the results confirm that the proportion of challenged turns increased dramatically with the rise of professional journalism. In 1956, and in the televised interviews in 1960, when interviews were conducted by party representatives, one out of ten turns from politicians to interviewers was challenged. In the late 1990s, when journalistic interviewing was well established, the corresponding figure was four out of ten turns. Put differently, in the period prior to journalistic interviewing, party leaders could typically expect to finish their speaking turns without being challenged (90 per cent of the turns were voluntary surrenders). Forty years later, party leaders were almost as likely to be interrupted as they were to complete their answers on their own conditions (44 and 43 per cent challenged turns in 1994 and 1998, respectively).¹²

However, while overall expectations are met, a closer look at the results adds nuances to the picture. To begin, the timing of change is surprising. Journalist interviewers in the early era (1966 and 1970) did not challenge party leaders more often than did the party interviewers in 1956 and 1960. That is, despite the controversies stirred by the introduction of journalistic interviewing, "The Three Os" (Ortmark, Olivecrona, and Orup) continued to apply the principle of courtesy from the party era. It took until the 1976 election before journalistic interviewing fundamentally altered. In this pivotal election, which led to a change in government for the first time since the 1930s, the proportion of journalists' challenges of party leaders rose to a new level (from 14 per cent to 36 per cent). Following this turning point, journalists' tendency to challenge remained remarkably stable until the mid- and late-1990s, when the level of interruptions reached a new high (44 per cent and 43 per cent in 1994 and 1998, respectively).

The timing of change is important as it suggests a complex road to the conditions of today. With regard to programme format we previously observed two periods of change: the introduction of journalistic interviewing in the mid-1960s, and, later, the introduction of journalist-driven debates in the 1990s. Changes in turn-takings during interviews followed a different route with the major break occurring in the 1970s. Which causal mechanisms drove the process is a topic to which we will return below.

Further nuances are added when the conduct of party leaders is taken into account. As can be seen from Figure 1, party leaders changed their behaviour during interviews earlier than journalists. In the old era, and in the first rounds of journalist interviews, party leaders followed a principle of courtesy according to which the other party most often is allowed to finish his/her turn without being interrupted (about nine out of ten turns were voluntary surrenders). However, the 1970 election interviews saw a drastic increase in party leader challenges (23 per cent compared with 12 per cent in 1966), and the level of challenges increased even further in 1976 (30 per cent challenges). Thus, indicating a more conflictual relationship, party leaders found it increasingly

difficult to hear out journalists' questions. Importantly, following the peak in 1976, party leaders changed again to a more subordinate interview strategy (post-1976 the proportion of challenged turns hovers at around 20 per cent).

Overall, these findings suggest that the relationship between journalists and party leaders during interviews developed in three periods. The first period, during which both parts applied a principle of strict courtesy, covers the party era and the initial journalist era. The second period, which lasted from 1970 to 1976, was a period of conflict. During this period party leaders and, eventually, journalists started to challenge the other party's right to finish turns according to their own wishes frequently. The third period, which began after the 1976 election and lasted throughout the remains of the period, established a new relationship in which journalists frequently challenged politicians' right to hold forth (to speak without interruptions), while party leaders lowered their ambition to interrupt their journalist opponents. Indeed, if the right to finish turns is seen as a micro-level struggle for power, journalists have gained the upper hand.

Likely causal mechanisms

From the above, the 1970s was a critical period in journalists' conduct. During a short period of time, a new rule of the game was established in which journalists were on the offensive, frequently challenging politicians' right to keep their turn. Importantly, journalists' conduct remained remarkably stable following the 1976 election. Such stability over time suggests the presence of a new norm for journalistic conduct during interviews. In what follows we ask what can account for this development.¹³

Our discussion focuses three potential causal mechanisms driving change in journalists' conduct: the conduct of party leaders (an increasing tendency to shy away from journalists' questions); generational replacement of journalist interviewers; and a changing *Zeitgeist* towards increasingly informal relationships.

A possible reason for journalistic change is that politicians developed the skills to avoid difficult questions, which in turn triggered a need to interrupt in order to bring them back to the topic of the original question (Ekström 2009; Greatbatch 1988). To test the support for this mechanism, we analysed in detail nearly 3000 interview questions and answers in party leader interviews from the period 1956-1994. We looked for two techniques for party leaders to wriggle out from uncomfortable questions; to impugn the relevance of the question, and to refuse to give a firm commitment when asked to (e.g.: 'If elected prime minister, will you raise taxes?'). Additionally, we registered whether party leaders failed to provide relevant information on questions that, according to our judgement, were clearly reasonable.

Using these analytical categories, we found no support for the hypothesis that party leaders increasingly shy away from difficult questions. Over the full

period, party leaders impugned the relevance of 5 per cent of all interview questions, refused to give firm commitments on 20 per cent of (the fewer) questions that required them to, and failed to provide relevant information on 17 per cent of the questions that were reasonably formulated. These levels of question wriggling might be provocative per se, but there is no discernible trend in the data. Given this, we conclude that party leaders' conduct does not account for the change in journalist conduct.

A further potential mechanism driving the process is generational replacement. In the literature on institutional change, the entrance of a large and homogenous group of newcomers within an institution is identified as a causal mechanism driving change (e.g. Sinclair 1986). During the 1970s, SR underwent a period of expansion; a large group of young and professionally educated journalists, many of whom (allegedly) were sympathetic to the radical left, were recruited to the organization. Conceivably, this new cadre of left-leaning young professionals took a more confrontational approach to party leader interviews.

The data, however, fail to confirm such causal expectations. As it turns out, few new recruits were assigned the prestigious task of conducting party leader interviews. Rather, one or two of 'The Three Os' took part in all interview programmes throughout the 1970s.¹⁴ Thus, the changing conduct during interviews can be observed in individual journalists. Illustratively, Åke Ortmark increased his level of interruptions from 9 per cent in 1966 to 42 per cent in 1976. Corresponding figures for Lars Orup were 4 per cent in 1966 and 42 per cent in 1985. Indeed, in the critical 1976 programmes, the veteran Ortmark challenged party leaders more frequently than younger co-interviewer Bo Holmström (42 per cent versus 35 per cent challenges).

The fact that individual journalists fundamentally changed their conduct over time suggests that broad societal trends are somehow involved in the process. A possible way to capture such broad trends is to focus on the well documented change towards informalization of the public sphere that Sweden (and other western nations) underwent from the late 1960s and onwards (e.g. Löfgren 1988; Svensson 1993; Wouters 2007;). Specifically, critical interviewing may be part of a general trend towards treating authorities less respectfully than before.

To search for evidence that the norm of informalization was driving the process, we have looked for verbal and visual manifestations of informalization in the election interviews. If the informalization norm should stand out as a distinct causal factor, we expect to observe a drastic increase of the level of informalization in the 1976 interviews. Moreover, since journalists' conduct remained largely stable following the critical election, we expect only minor changes in the level of informalization post-1976.

This time the empirical evidence is mixed. On one hand we find several manifestations of informalization in the 1976 interviews: more relaxed dress codes (dark suits and white shirts were replaced by blazers and separate

trousers); a more everyday way of addressing party leaders ('du' [you] rather than the formal *herr* [Mr]); and a studio decor in which journalists and party leaders shared a small café-style table in a brightly lit room, rather than being located at separate tables spaced far apart from each other in a dark room.¹⁵ All this suggest that a growing norm of informalization shaped a context in which journalists (as well as citizens, whose interests journalists presumably represent) were on more equal footing with politicians. On the other hand, trends towards informalization continued at a steady pace long after 1976 with no corresponding change in journalist conduct. A manifestation of this is SR's decision in 1979 and 1982 to introduce into the programmes satirical images and sketches that poked fun at party leaders. Surely, if the norm of informalization was a clearly identified causal factor, we would expect journalistic conduct to have changed accordingly.

Overall, we find no support for mono-causal interpretations of the forces driving change in relationship between journalists and politicians. Rather, we suggest that several factors together contributed to the changing relationship between journalists and politicians in the 1970s. The basis for the increased susceptibility to interrupt was the journalistic idea that power holders should not be allowed to present unquestioned their biased worldviews to the public, combined with SR's desire to make good television with high intensity. The growing norm of informalization further helped to make it acceptable to challenge politicians during interviews. In addition to these general and persistent factors, the mid-1970s saw a number of temporary incidents that likely triggered the interruption propensity into full force. We are referring to the global oil crisis, which made it clear that politicians were no longer in control over the economy, and the Watergate scandal, which highlighted questions of moral integrity of political leaders (cf. Clayman et al, 2010).

Conclusions

This chapter has provided a micro-perspective on a major societal change which, with variations, can be observed throughout the western world – a shift from a condition in which the terms for political communication are dictated by political parties to a condition in which the media has a leading role. Our review of the history of Swedish election specials indeed shows some major changes in this respect. The changes manifest themselves in several ways: first in the fact that the formats of the election coverage, as well as the access to the programmes, move from being determined in negotiations between the parties and the SR to a situation where the SR and its journalists define conditions. Second, the changes can also be traced in the broadcasting studio, namely as a shift of micro power over the verbal interaction in party leader interviews.

Above we referred to *professionalization of journalism*, as well as *party logic* and *media logic*. These concepts can help us understand and discuss our results. To begin, our study illustrates the broader trends these concepts intend to grasp. In the words of Hallin and Mancini we can interpret our findings as a sign of differentiation of the media from the political system, meaning that 'the media system increasingly operates according to a distinctive logic of its own, displacing to a significant extent the logic of party politics...' (Hallin & Mancini 2004, p. 253). When SR makes decisions independently both in the boardroom and in the studio, and at the same time the political parties have accepted this state of affairs, media logic has come into play. The gradual acceptance of journalists' interruption of speech in the TV studios is another observation supporting the idea of media logic replacing political logic.

Professionalization of journalism also has a bearing on our results. Two of the aspects of professional journalism that Hallin and Mancini (2004) highlight is of particular relevance for our results. *Autonomy* manifests itself both in the sense that journalists act independently of government, parties or other interests, and in that it becomes both accepted and expected that the journalists in command of the interviews make their own judgements concerning both which topics to bring up and the way questions are asked, without being subordinate to other institutions such as the political parties or the government. A shift of journalistic norms is also detectable, and in particular concerning the objectivity norm. Indeed, journalists adhered to the objectivity ideal long before the dramatic shift in the 1960s, suggesting that this aspect of professionalism was already in place. However, it was not until the debut of the critical scrutinizing journalist that distinct professional norms of newsworthiness were given priority over neutrality and balance (Djerf Pierre & Weibull 2008; Hallin & Mancini 2004). From this point, SR would not consider any other interviewers than those supposedly in possession of this professional know-how: the journalists.

Apart from the general concepts of professionalization and media logic the results also lend themselves to a discussion on how the audience is viewed, in particular from the horizon of the SR officials. When in the early paternalistic age the SR wished to protect the audience from a coarse and uncultivated political debate, the professionals of the later, journalist-controlled era stressed that listeners and viewers would benefit from more fast-paced and less ideology-laden election specials. The politicians, on the other hand, seem to have had less developed ideas about the broadcast medium and its audience.

The road to professional and critical journalism in election specials we have described above is hardly a linear one. Neither is it marked by a grand plan conceived by rational actors making informed choices. Instead, when looking at the history through archive documents and other sources, we find a series of decisions or other crucial events that in hindsight appear as important for how the election specials evolved. We have argued that a central decision was

to take on SR journalists as hosts and interviewers. This decision in 1966 was crucial for the professionalization of election specials. However, other such decisions were also identified, underlining the idea that the process has been stepwise (see Djerf Pierre & Weibull 2008, for a discussion).

From the perspective of the parties, the negotiations were successful when the parties could retain as much control as possible over the broadcast format (such as in the case of the party presentations). Apart from that, the argumentation of the parties appears neither persistent nor cohesive. Parties seldom agreed in their preferences for election programmes, and this disagreement played into the hands of SR, which gained a better bargaining position.

SR, on the other hand, shows a more consistent line of argument over the years. From the start of the election specials, SR and its employees would constantly argue for formats limiting the leeway for politicians (party presentations were never popular in the SR headquarters). In the 1930s a question was how to hold back politicians in order to temper their debate for the sake of good taste and public education. Much later, in the age of critical scrutiny, a strong argument was that unrestrained politicians would be too propagandistic and conceal problems that were interesting and relevant for the citizens. From rather early on, a notion of 'good broadcasts' can be found among the SR representatives. The idea that there are qualities inherent in the medium (be it radio, or television), which can be more important than claims from the world of politics, is, we argue, a sign of the gradual professionalization of public service journalism. In their own opinion, the competence to judge what counts as 'good television' rests with the professional staff whose judgements should also be decisive in the making of the broadcasts.

A discussion on consequences

Politicians disapproved of the shift from party logic to media logic. Illustrative evidence of disapproval can be found in surveys of Nordic members of parliament from the 1980s and mid-1990s (Esaïasson & Holmberg 1996; Hardarsson 2000). When asked about the perceived power of various political institutions, MPs ascribed high levels of influence to the media, on a par with the most central representative institutions. Moreover, when MPs were asked to compare actual (perceived) power and the normatively appropriate level of power for respective institutions, the media was deemed clearly more powerful than they wished for.

It is no surprise that politicians were concerned about losing control over the terms for political communication. However, it is less clear that citizens have reason to side with politicians in the struggle for communicative control. To evaluate the consequences for citizens of the shift from party control to

journalist control, we need to learn how the change has affected possibilities for individuals to make enlightened political decisions (e.g. Dahl 1989). The most relevant criterion for evaluation, we argue, is the quality of information generated by party logic and media logic, respectively. Obviously, to compare two imperfect logics for political communication is different from comparing the current situation with an ideal situation in which citizens receive full information. Thus, while there is no shortage of critics of the type of information that media logic generates (see, for example, Brants & Van Praag 2006; Patterson 1993), it is less given that the quality of information would have been higher if the parties had maintained control over the process.

To address how the change towards media logic has affected the quality of political information in election specials, we subjected party leader interviews and party leader debates from 1956 to 1994 to content analysis. To isolate the causal effects of journalist control (media logic) while controlling for other societal changes, we made three comparisons. Within party leader interviews, we looked at the content pre- and post-1966, and at the development over time during the journalist era, 1966-1994. Between types of programme, we contrasted interviews with party leader debates throughout the period. Party leader debates are a relevant point of contrast because they remained under party control throughout the 1990s. This means that debates are indicative of the extent to which information generated by party logic would change with time.¹⁶

Our content analysis registered a number of indicators associated with pace of programme and media dramaturgy. A summary of these findings runs as follows. With regard to the pace of programmes, we find clear evidence of journalist effects. For instance, under journalist control the number of questions increased, as did the number of words spoken per time unit. Corresponding changes of pace were less pronounced in party leader debates. Interestingly, many pace effects were established already in the very first journalist-run interviews in 1966.

With regard to media dramaturgy, we followed the literature that criticizes media driven political information and searched for evidence that journalists generate information which converges on *conflicts*, *concretion* and *simplifications* (e.g. Hernes 1983; Patterson 1993). Empirical findings are mixed. In accordance with expectations, journalists prioritized simplified information. Typical examples are that journalists probed for firm commitments to specific policy proposals, and asked forward-looking questions about the years to come rather than about accountability for unwelcome developments since the previous election, and about long-term developments beyond the next election. Furthermore, journalists provided little space for party leaders to substantiate their proposals with complex arguments. Once more, the simplification effect was established in the first journalist-run interviews in 1966.

However, we find few systematic differences between journalist and party controlled information with regard to concreteness. For example, both parts were equally prone to prioritize materialistic perspectives on policy issues (rather than value-based perspectives), and to provide illustrative real-world *exempla*. Moreover, with regard to conflict orientation, journalists generated information that actually was less conflictual than party generated information. The reason for this is that journalist interviewers made it clear that party leaders were expected to talk exclusively about their own policies, and not to attribute blame for unwelcome developments to other parties. Also this low-conflict effect was established from the very beginning of journalist interviewing in 1966.

Overall, in the context of election specials, journalist control has led to faster paced discussions, a stronger focus on the immediate future, less complex arguments, more frequent commitments to specific policy proposals, and less bickering between politicians. From the perspective of a politically well informed citizenry, these consequences are not easily evaluated. On one hand, it is probably beneficial for citizens to escape slow programmes showing politicians bickering among themselves. Moreover, at least sometimes it is illuminating for citizens to learn about specific policy proposals that will be implemented after the election. On the other hand, citizens would clearly benefit from learning how politicians substantiate policy proposals. Moreover, journalist queries into the immediate future undermine possibilities for well informed accountability processes (Kumlin 2011), and for citizens to consider long-term developments beyond the coming election period.

From the perspective of citizens in search of high quality information, perhaps the safest conclusion to draw is that both party logic and media logic have upsides as well as downsides. Consequently, when thinking about institutional arrangements for election specials – and for political coverage in general – reformers should search for ways to boost the strong points of each logic.

Notes

1. Seen from a global point of view, we should be aware that other values may have a stronger appeal among journalists in 'non-Western' countries (see Hanitzsch, 2010).
2. See, however, Maurer and Reinemann (2006) who question the merits of debates when it comes to increasing knowledge among the audience.
3. For analytical details we refer to Esaiasson and Håkansson (2002).
4. The Social Democrats were in a governing position for 59 out of 68 years between 1932 and 2000, and mostly in a single-party minority government.
5. Party leader debates of this kind were aired in radio and/or television in each parliamentary election from 1936 to 1998, with the exception of wartime elections 1940-1944.
6. In the election debates of the 1930s a nationally oriented communist party was represented, while the *Komintern*-affiliated SKP (Swedish Communist Party) was kept out. During the war, only representatives of the four parties regarded as democratic (Agrarians, Liberals, Conservatives and Social Democrats) appeared in the limited offering of election specials.

7. This principle was upheld until 1991, when a non-parliamentary party (Ny Demokrati) was included in the final debate by references to its strong performance in opinion polls.
8. In particular Prime Minister Erlander gave feeble answers when asked about the shortage of housing. His inability to reply when asked which advice he could give a newly-wed couple without a home of their own is perhaps the most infamous moment of Swedish election specials.
9. An illustrative fact is that SR staff were referred to as 'SR employees' rather than journalists, producers and the like. This nomenclature pointed to norms and duties similar to those of public officials.
10. To exemplify, following a hearing on interview techniques in May 1962, Radionämnden, the internal audit institution, gave its explicit support to the emerging new interview techniques (Esaïasson & Håkansson, 2002, p. 117). The title of an article in the SR Yearbook of 1964 captures how old-school employees viewed the new journalistic style: 'Stop talking while I'm interrupting you'.
11. For documentation of the interviews and for details of the empirical study to be presented below, we refer to Esaïasson and Håkansson (2002, in particular pages 115-137; 252-253).
12. Although the results are not directly comparative, studies of party leader interviews in the 2002, 2006 and 2010 parliamentary elections show that journalist challenges remain at a comparatively high level (see Ekström et al, 2012).
13. When presented with the stability finding during our personal interviews, journalists reacted with surprise. All of them expected (and would have preferred) greater variation with time, with interview context, and with the personal characteristics of party leaders.
14. As late as 1985, Lars Orup was called in from retirement to supplement younger colleagues Pia Brandelius and Karin Andersson.
15. In 1966 and 1970 the polite phrases to politicians ('We thank NN for making himself available') were still prevalent. In 1976, in contrast, journalists addressed the party leaders by their full name, without titles and courteous phrases.
16. For analytical details, we refer to Esaïasson and Håkansson (2002, pp. 153-203).

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The Development of Broadcast Genres

Chapter 10

Even Better than the Real Thing

The cultural form of televised sport

Bo Reimer

Introduction

Ever since the start of television, sport has constituted one of the medium's most important and popular genres. Due to its importance, it is furthermore a genre that continually has had to re-invent itself. The genre has a cultural form (Williams 1974), and that form is continually changing. This chapter will trace the development of the genre as well as discussing the implications of the development for the actual experience of watching sports on television.

I will start by outlining the characteristics of the genre, and my perspective on how and why these are continually changing. In the next step I will outline the different phases that sports have gone through on Swedish television since its official start in 1956. Finally I will bring up some key problematics of televised sport, and discuss these both from a Swedish and a more general perspective.

The genre of televised sport

The social, cultural and economic importance of televised sport cannot be overestimated. Claiming that 'the world stands still' during the Olympic Games or the football World Cup is not totally misleading; these championships make up some of television's most important media events.¹ Furthermore, sport has functioned as a predecessor for other genres. This concerns language – showing the possibilities of commenting live. This concerns technology – showing the possibilities of working outside during difficult conditions, using slow motion and multiple camera angles, etc. And it concerns narration – showing how the mixing of fact with fiction can increase viewer interest.

Despite the genre's unquestionable importance, for a long time televised sport gained surprisingly little attention by media researchers. Now, however, the interest is rising.² However, it may be argued that the even though the genre no longer is under studied, it may still be under theorized (cf. Raunsbjerg 2001).

Why is that? One reason, as Raunsbjerg argues, is the self evidentness of the genre. What is televised sport? The question may seem meaningless. Isn't the answer obvious? A person turning on the television set, finding sport, immediately understands which kind of programme it is. In that respect sport may seem to be a clear cut, almost transparent, genre. But it may not be that simple.

A common sense definition of televised sport leads to a static view of the genre. Such a definition does not take into account that what may be categorized as sport is not self evident. And it does not take into account that changes in the ways that sport is produced may change the view on what sport 'is'.

One way of starting to problematize the genre is to distinguish between two kinds of sport programmes – live productions and magazines.³ The advantage of this distinction is that it makes clear that the genre cannot exclusively be defined by its live broadcasts. On the other hand, it is difficult to get away from the fact that it is live broadcasts that typify the genre. In the beginning of television, every programme was in principle either live or made to look live (Ellis 2000, p. 31). And with the exception of media events that stop normal programming, televised sport is still one of the few genres that is based on live broadcasting. That gives the genre a certain responsibility for how live television will develop. The fact that televised sport is sometimes allowed to interrupt ordinary programming is also special. Margaret Morse claims that 'the position of sport in television flow raises it, like the news, above genres which specialize in mere entertainment. The aura of scientificity of sport, its news-value and its perceived realism protect its extraordinary status.' (1983, p. 60).

The 'extraordinary status' of televised sport can be questioned. Studies of the status of sport departments of both public service and commercial television companies give a picture of departments that have to fight to be recognized (Reimer 2002, p. 252-55). And televised sport is, despite its apparent transparency, a complicated genre. Garry Whannel has argued that it, more than any other genre, consists of a combination of entertainment, news and drama. It tries to capture as many viewers as possible in a light-hearted way, it tries to represent and report on reality as faithfully as possible, but it is also a story with a beginning, a middle and an end (1992, p. 61).

Whannel's characterization has been very influential. It is reasonable in that it points to the complexity of the genre – and therefore maybe also indicates the reasons for its popularity. However, one problem with the characterization is that it is static. According to Whannel, televised sport may be found in the middle of a triangle with entertainment, news and drama as the three angles. This placement is not self evident, however. It may change over time and it may look different in different cultures. Whannel's characterization should be seen as a force field, within which television is produced, a force field within which positions are constantly changing. Using the terminology of Raymond Williams, sport has a cultural form, a form that is shaped by many different kinds

of forces, a form that is continuously changing and a form that furthermore looks different in different local contexts. This means that in order to grasp the characteristics of the genre, it is necessary to look upon it in historically specific settings. The form develops in interaction between producers (in a broad sense) and an audience, but within continuously changing contexts, both on a micro and a macro level. The preconditions and the possibilities for producing sport change when the contexts change. If the context is political, then sport producers have to think 'politically'. If it is economic, they have to think in economic terms. This does not mean that the work carried out by the producers follows automatically from the context. Television production in itself takes part in changing the contexts. But when the context changes, then the frameworks change and it is necessary to think differently.

The six phases of sport on Swedish television

How has televised sport looked within the particular context of Sweden? The official start for television was in 1956, even though experiments had been carried out since 1954. Looking at the way sport has been produced and broadcast since then, it is possible to outline six phases which sport has gone through. These are:

1. Finding a Place (1956-1960)
2. Becoming a 'Natural' Part of Television (1961-1967)
3. Dealing (Unsuccessfully) with Politics (1968-1972)
4. Sport is Sport (1973-1986)
5. Commercialization and Competition (1987-2003)
6. Ever-Present Everywhere (2004-)⁴

Finding a place

As discussed in earlier chapters of this book, television came fairly late to Sweden. This means that the possibilities were there to build on experiences gathered in other countries. It was also possible to build on previous Swedish radio experiences. These experiences of course also included the broadcasting of sport. Parts of the 1936 Summer Olympics in Berlin were broadcast to large television screens in a number of public spaces in the city (Hart-Davis 1986). In June 1938, 2000 Londoners were able to watch Wimbledon tennis in their households, and in 1939, baseball became the first sport to be shown on American television (Hesling 1986; cf. Boyle & Haines 2000; Goldlust 1987; Whannel 2009).

All in all, looking at the development of sport on television before the start of Swedish television, some conclusions could be drawn; conclusions of relevance for how sport could be presented on Swedish television.

First, sport had an obvious news interest. Media – television, radio as well as newspapers – regularly reported from the major sporting events: heavyweight boxing championship games, international football games, horseracing etc. These reports were extremely popular. However, the events were not treated journalistically; critical sports journalism did not exist.

Second, it was clear that sporting events were suited for dramatization. Early experiments with moving pictures naturally focused on movement, and thus sport events became popular topics. But in order to produce events with high visual quality, as well as dramatically interest, quite often sport events were staged. For instance, it was not unusual to produce films of boxing matches with two actors playing the parts of the boxers. Similarly, in order to make events as fascinating as possible, radio commentators frequently made the events they reported more dramatic than they actually were, something which of course was possible since the listeners did not see what was going on. Baseball commentators quickly became masters of this technique.

Third, it seemed clear that the relationship between media and sport was historically and culturally specific. In the United States, with a broadcast system based on advertising, the presence of sport on television depended on its popularity. When a sport seemed popular, it was broadcast. When the appeal disappeared, so did the sport. Between 1945 and 1955, sport was highly visible on American television, and especially primarily boxing was very popular. The next ten years, sport was not as visible in the programming schedules (Rader 1984). In Great Britain, the situation was different. There, within the framework of the BBC public service model, the objective was to showcase the national culture, and sport was unquestionably a part of this culture. Therefore it had its national place on the BBC, no matter its popularity.⁵

Looking at the way sport was introduced on Swedish television, it does not seem as if the public service organization particularly cared to take notice of the experiences gathered in other countries. In comparison with the equally public service oriented BBC in Great Britain, it did not seem as if the opinion within Swedish public broadcasting was that sport was of specific cultural importance. In the initial document dealing with the education of television personnel in 1954 in different genres, sport was not mentioned at all, and no one was employed specifically to produce sport programmes.

However, due to its perceived popularity – but equally, due to its availability (sport events were taking place all the time) – sport did turn up on Swedish television even in the trial phase between 1954 and 1956, with ice hockey being the first sport shown on television, followed by tennis. Once regular programming had started, in the autumn of 1956, sport constituted an important part of the output.

Unquestionably the most important television sport event during these early years of Swedish television was the 1958 football World Cup. Held in Sweden, it was technologically and administratively a demanding undertaking. Eleven games from three different arenas were to be broadcast live through the Eurovision network and another 35 games from twelve different arenas were to be filmed, with the films subsequently being shipped all around the world. All in all, the event was very successful and, more than any other single television event, it led to Swedish households buying television sets. To that extent, the World Cup sold television to the Swedish population.

In starting a completely new venture, like the Swedish broadcasting corporation in starting the broadcasting of television, it obviously takes time to settle down. And this settling down does not follow an easy formula, in the sense that all parts of an organization settle down at the same time and in a similar manner. From the official start in 1956, it took about four years for sport to find its place. The issues that dominated this phase were on the one hand that of actually producing sport on television, making it function as smoothly as possible: making sure that live broadcasts were not interrupted for technical reasons, making sure that the viewers could get a reasonably good view of the event being covered, etc. The other issue concerned how to organize the work internally. This took about four years; four years of experimenting with different sports, different producers, different commentators, etc. Some sports, some producers, some commentators worked well, others did not. And those that worked were kept. In that way sport started to get the shape that it was to have for a long time; a shape that the audience started to expect. This meant, for instance, counting on being able to watch the football World Cup as well as the summer and winter Olympics every four years, being able to watch the world championships in ice hockey every second year, and being able to watch ski jumping from Garmen-Partenkirchen every New Year's Day. It also meant being able to count on the productions being similar, and the events being covered by the same commentators. In 1960, the summer Olympics were televised in Sweden for the first time. This meant that all major global sporting events had been covered on television at least once.

Becoming a 'natural' part of television

It takes time to build a fully functioning television company, even more so if what you start is something that had never existed before. Some things fall into place fairly quickly, other things take longer. As argued above, it took about four years to get sport in place, which, in relation to some genres, like news, was a long time, but in relation to other genres, was fairly quick. From then on, sport could be regarded as a 'natural' part of Swedish television, led from 1961 by a formally appointed director. However, in writing 'natural', I

do not mean this in an essential way. Rather it had become natural through a naturalization process, within which it seemed as if it would have been strange had sport not been on Swedish television.

According to the first major survey carried out on Swedish television, in 1962, about two-thirds of the population watched sport at least 'sometimes'. In the early 1960s about 100 hours of sport were broadcast a year. In the late 1960s, that figure had risen to about 350, which made up about 15 per cent of the total television output.

The naturalization process was not only based on increasing the number of hours of sport. It had also to do with the creation of rituals. The previously mentioned regular broadcasts of global championships were of course crucial here, as was the focus on a small number of commentators. But equally important was the start of a regular Sunday evening sport programme, reporting on everything that had happened that week, and especially that weekend.

For almost a decade, sport producers had the possibility to develop sport programmes within a context that could be regarded as sport friendly; there was support from the public service organization they belonged to, and on the whole the public was satisfied with the sport output. However, in the late 1960s the situation changed rather dramatically.

Dealing (unsuccessfully) with politics

In 1968, the Swedish national team in tennis was drawn to meet the then apartheid-based Rhodesia in the Davis Cup. At the time Sweden had not declared a complete boycott against the country, but for the last three years there had been no political contacts and a trade embargo was in place. However, since there was no formal United Nations decree against the country, the Swedish tennis federation decided that the game had to be played.

Originally the match was due to be played in Stockholm, but was moved to the small village of Båstad in southern Sweden, a village where many major Davis Cup matches had been played during the years. The idea was that the environment would be calmer there. But a couple of hundred protesters turned up, and after a clash between the protesters and the police, the match was temporarily cancelled and then moved to the French Riviera. Early on, even before the clash in Båstad, Swedish television had decided not to cover the match as a sporting event. It did cover the events in Båstad in news programmes. For that coverage, it was reported to the Swedish Broadcasting Commission on the grounds that only police and not demonstrators were given the opportunity to give their views on the events. The Commission's decision was that Swedish television had not breached the requirements of its broadcasting licence, but it was criticized for not letting the demonstrators speak.

A couple of months later, the summer Olympic Games were due to take place in Mexico City. The summer leading up to the Olympics was violent, with demonstrations and clashes between police and students, and only ten days before the start of the games, at least 60 people, maybe more – men, women and children – were shot to death by police during a demonstration. Discussions were heated concerning whether the games should go on, but they did, and Avery Brundage, the president of the International Olympic Committee, stated: 'If the Games are to be stopped every time the politicians violate the law of humanity, there will never be any international contests' (Ali & Watkins 1998, p. 176).

Swedish television had a difficult time covering the Games, trying to find a balance between covering it as sport itself and covering its political context. Programmes made before the start of the Games, trying to present Mexico and Mexico City from a cultural perspective, were criticized in the Swedish press for being naïve. And when the two American sprinters John Carlos and Tommie Smith gave a Black Power salute on the victory platform after the 200-metres race, Swedish television did not know how to deal with it. The event took place in the middle of the night, Swedish time, and was not shown live. When the events of the night were summarized on television the next morning, the journalist responsible for the broadcast decided that the demonstration was not to be mentioned at all. As he stated in an interview the next day: 'I did not want to mention the demonstration. It should not have occurred at a sport event ... I did not want to take a stand on the issue of race.'

The next year, Czechoslovakia was supposed to have held the World Cup in ice hockey, but due to the Russian invasion the year before, the competition was moved to Sweden. The main interest was devoted to the matches between the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia. The matches were very tough and people in the stands were holding anti-Soviet Union placards. These were never shown by the Swedish producer, however. Some months later, the European Athletics championships were due to take place in Athens, Greece. Again a discussion was held whether Sweden should participate. Despite doubts, when the International Association of Athletics recommended its members should participate, Sweden decided to do so. However, the board of the Swedish broadcasting corporation, also responsible for television – and against the wishes of a majority of the journalists at Swedish television – decided not to send any journalists to Athens and only to give the results in ordinary news broadcasts.

The political context, which dominated the way sport was to be handled on Swedish television, culminated with the 1972 summer Olympics in Munich, Germany, and what has been called 'the Munich Massacre', when members of the Palestinian group Black September took Israeli athletes as hostages. In the end, eleven Israeli athletes, one German police man and five members of the Black September group were shot dead.

Sport is sport

After the Mexico and München Olympics, was it possible ever again to treat sport just as sport? One could imagine that there would be no turning back from forever placing sport within a political discourse, and the discussion of the relationship between sport and politics has been kept alive. Later Olympics, were to be boycotted by different countries and the decision to award China the 2008 Olympic games was controversial. However, after the politically charged late 1960s/early 1970s, things gradually went back to 'normal' in many ways. And that included how sport was broadcast in Sweden: once again sport was to be about sport.

In the particular case of Sweden, two athletes to a great extent dominated sport in the 1970s. One was tennis player Björn Borg, who among other triumphs won the Wimbledon singles tournament five years in a row (1976-1980). The other was downhill skier Ingemar Stenmark, twice Olympic champion and still the all-time leader when it comes to victories in international ski races.

Being Swedish, Björn Borg of course had a special standing with Swedish fans and audiences. But his popularity reached a long way outside of Sweden, being one of the most well known people in the world in the 1970s. Ingemar Stenmark, although popular in international skiing circles, was far more of a specific Swedish phenomenon. And given the fact that he raced very frequently, and that the races were almost always broadcast live during the day time, the popular notion was that 'Sweden stood still' when he competed. In schools and in work places, people gathered around television sets watching Stenmark's battles with continental skiers. Such a close relationship between an athlete, television sport and Swedish audiences has not been seen again – and may never be seen again. This is not due to the fact that such an athlete will never be born in Sweden again. Footballer Zlatan Ibrahimovic is as well known and talked about in Sweden today as was Stenmark in the 1970s. But the media system has changed. Being able to watch Stenmark race live on television was truly exceptional in itself. Today it is possible to see every game Ibrahimovic plays if you subscribe to the correct pay cable channel. But you can also watch all other important football games played the same week in the English, Italian and Spanish leagues – as well as all other international sport events. Thus, the performances of Ibrahimovic cannot stand out in the same way.

Commercialization and competition

For the department of sport on Swedish television, the 1970s was a time of stability and consolidation. But going into the 1980s, the question of finance became increasingly important. In Swedish broadcasting corporations's annual report for 1981/82 the head of the sport department wrote that things were getting problematic. First, sport organizations increasingly demanded payment

for the rights to show sport on television. Second, American television companies made sport events increasingly expensive to acquire. Third, 'third parties', agents who bought up broadcast rights in order to sell them, were becoming increasingly common. And fourth, cable and video companies were starting to compete for the rights. For television, up until now sport productions had been relatively cheap. That time was now gone, he argued.

What was happening was that sport and television were getting increasingly intertwined. The big sport events – the Olympic Games, the football World Cup, etc. – delivered big audiences to television. This was something the sport organizations could ask money for. Commercial sport channels could cover such costs through advertising. But for public service television, that possibility did not exist. The result was an increasingly market dominated and complex system.⁶

In Sweden, a completely new situation occurred in 1988 when public service television lost the right to show the men's single finals of the tennis Australian Open to commercial station TV3. Swedish star Mats Wilander was to play Australian Pat Cash, and only 300,000 households were able to watch the game. When the next year TV3 also acquired the rights to the World Championship in ice hockey – which was to take place in Sweden – it was clear that the public service monopoly on major sport events was broken once and for all. From there on, it was not clear which company would broadcast what, and which parts of the Swedish population that would be able to take part of the broadcasts.

Ever-present everywhere

Coming to the present time, it is still the case that the competition is fierce between different companies when it comes to acquiring rights for major sport events. And this competition is fiercer than ever. In early 2012, Swedish public service television lost the competition for the rights to broadcast the 2014 and 2016 Olympics to the Modern Times Group (MTG). This means that for the first time ever, not all Swedish citizens will be able to watch these games.

However, another development that has taken place simultaneously is that the amount of sport shown on television has increased dramatically. In 2004, the MTG-owned Viasat introduced four specific sport channels directed towards the Swedish audience, and the international television company Canal+ followed after with its specific sport channel a couple of months later. This expansion of sport output has been complemented by pay-per-view channels, making it possible, for instance, to watch every Swedish first division football game, either on television or on the Internet. To this must be added the increasing availability of sport bars, showing different sport events on different television sets. Today, sport is ever-present everywhere.

Televised sport: key problematics

Looking back on fifty years of sport on Swedish television, it is clear that the contexts within which sport has been produced have looked different at different points in time. The contexts have been shaped by internal, organizational factors, by politics, by economy and competition – and by sports.

From the point of view of the organization producing sport, the best thing would be if sport could just be sport. This was at least the view held by the first generations of commentators and producers of sport on Swedish television. But that has not always been possible. As pointed out earlier, the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico proved difficult to deal with. Not mentioning the Black Power demonstration at all was in retrospect obviously a mistake, but Swedish television did try to deal with the relationship between sport and politics in a balanced way – even though not exactly with total success.

An interesting example from the 1968 Olympics was the broadcast of the opening ceremony. In covering this event, the decision was made to complement the traditional sport commentator with a news journalist. The event took two hours, and even though the two men took turns to speak, they never really communicated with each other. Here follows a small extract from the broadcast:

News Journalist: Then there was the fight over South Africa, and their banning due to race discrimination. And the same problem with the United States: the question whether coloureds should boycott the Games. Czechoslovakia was also a problem. Finally the internal conditions which almost put an end to everything. A controversial Olympics, more problematic than ever before.

Sport Commentator: The Algerian team on its way in. And then Argentina. With ladies in dashing light blue and white hats and white shoes. It looks adorable! The men are not that colourful. Dark jackets and dark grey trousers.

News Journalist: The people in power have made this out to be a peaceful Olympics while the students in this country characterize it differently. On a placard held by a demonstrator it said: '68. The Olympics of Brutality'.

Sport Commentator (interrupting): Australia in picture! 137 athletes. The girls in dazzling yellow dresses, the gentlemen in green and white. Green jackets which Australians often wear in occasions like these. And white hats with green ribbons. Looked very proper.

News Journalist: I saw this morning in the paper that the IOC begged the whole world to keep peace during the 15 days of the Olympics ... But one cannot get away from thinking that it is grotesque seeing armed soldiers with doves of peace on their arms.

Sport Commentator (interrupting): Gentlemen in shorts! From Bermuda!

The dialogue may seem comical, but it clearly shows the problem of how to represent sport simultaneously as entertainment and as a serious societal phenomenon. And the general verdict by Swedish audiences seemed to be a dislike of the political angle. Consequently, the closing ceremony was only covered by a sport reporter.⁷

Another key problematic concerns commercialization and competition. In the previous section, I viewed it from the perspective of public service television; of how they had to deal with a new situation. But the problematic can be regarded as more general than that. And it is increasingly tied to the process of globalization.

Globalization is in itself not new to sport. In order to make possible competition between athletes from different places, rules of different sports were standardized early on. This was done before the start of the nineteenth century for horse racing, golf, cricket, boxing, rowing and fencing, leading to an internationalization of these sports. Other sports followed. Already in the second half of the nineteenth century athletes – primarily British ones – started to call themselves ‘world champions’ (Van Bottenburg 2001).⁸

Globalization is not a new feature of the media system either. It is to a large extent due to the media bringing continents closer – compressing time and space – that globalization processes are possible (Harvey 1989). But the globalization process has intensified. Sport events are increasingly turning into global events; the Olympics, the football World Cup and the athletics world championships are watched all over the world, and athletes such as Usain Bolt and David Beckham are universally known. Global forces play an increasing role for the sports/media complex; similarities between media systems are becoming greater and independent decisions on how to deal with televised sport are becoming increasingly difficult to make on a national level.

What are the consequences for televised sport more generally of an increasingly commercial, deregulated and globalized media system? One main consequence is that broadcasting companies – both commercial and public service ones – increasingly have to focus upon attracting large audiences. Commercial stations need large audiences in order to secure advertisers and public service stations need large audiences in order to legitimize their existence. This, in turn, has led to changes in the ways that sport is represented on television.⁹

For obvious reasons, the first sport productions on television were crude. The first ever baseball game on American television (1939) was covered by one camera, and so was the first ice hockey game broadcast on Swedish television. Even though early audiences were thrilled just by being able to see something, watching sport on television had little similarity with watching it live.¹⁰

However, technological developments changed the situation. Through the use of more cameras, and through the use of slow motion and repeats, the feeling of presence was increasingly heightened for the viewers.

In this initial phase, technology was used in order to recreate what was happening as faithfully and realistically as possible. However, increasingly this striving for realism began to be replaced by a deliberate attempt of fictionalization. Productions were still dramatized, but for a different purpose.¹¹ This change did not occur over night. And it did not occur at the same time everywhere. It started in the United States in relation to domestic sports, primarily American football. It was then subsequently applied to the Olympics. And given the global character of the Olympics, the American way of representing sport fictionally was spread to other nations.

The highlight of this trend was the 1996 summer Olympic Games in Atlanta, Georgia.

During the games, NBC, which was responsible for the global broadcasts, coined the phrase 'plausibly live' to describe its productions. The phrase was used to describe broadcasts that were not live but could have been.

The risk with broadcasting sport live is always that the excitement disappears; one team or one athlete is superior to the opponents. Thus, NBC argued, in order to guarantee excitement it was safer to broadcast edited versions of events; versions that producers and commentators were in total control over. They created excitement by broadcasting trailers – will the US win the gold in the men's 4 X 100 meters relay? – when they already knew the US had won. And on at least one occasion NBC chose to tell a story that was simply not true. When the young, injured gymnast Kerri Strug made her last jump in the women's team finals, it was presented as being heroic and deciding for the competition, when in fact the jump was without importance; the US had already won the competition (Rivenburgh, 2003).

In order to further assure the viewers of a captivating production, a focus was put on story-telling. Before the games TV crews were sent all over the world to produce short video films describing unusual life histories of athletes. These films were subsequently shown in relation to the different events – sometimes even in the middle of an event.¹² The productions of the Olympics resembled the ones of melodramas and soap operas.¹³

Such a focused attempt on the fictionalizing of sport has not been seen since the 1996 Olympics. But there is definitely a general tendency to heighten the excitement of televised sport – partly through high tech production. Producers are experimenting with new camera angles and with microphones close to the action. Images that can only be seen on television, like the ten-yard marker in American football and the distance between the position of a free kick and the goal in football, are employed, and viewers are invited to chat over the internet with commentators. There is also an increase in speed. Camera cuts are becoming more and more frequent. When Sweden and Brazil met in the final of the football World Cup in 1958, there was a cut between cameras every 35 seconds. When Sweden played Belgium in the opening game of the Euro-

pean championship in 2000, a cut was made every seven seconds. The game is moving at a pace that is five times faster. The motto of the Olympics – *citius, altius, fortius* (faster, higher, stronger) – fits television sport productions as well as it fits athletes' performances.¹⁴

What are the consequences for televised sport of the tendencies outlined above? Two things stand out.

On the one hand, sport productions are increasingly becoming spectacles. In order to compete with the experience of witnessing an event live, and in order to compete with other TV programmes (and, of course, with other kinds of entertainment), a sport production has to be larger than life. It has to give something more than 'just' sport. A televised sport production is made into a major media event, an event in which television plays as significant a part as the event itself. For example, the opening and closing ceremonies of the Olympic Games draw more viewers than the actual competitions.¹⁵

But there is also another consequence of the ways that TV sport productions are moving. It used to be the case that televised sport was produced quite differently in different countries. In British productions of football, for instance, cameras were placed closer to the field than in German productions, and the rhythm of football productions was different in southern and northern European. It is still possible to notice national differences in sport productions, but these differences have become smaller. There is a belief among the key players within the sports/media complex that audiences want to feel at home at a televised sport event; as a viewer, you are not supposed to be able to tell whether the World Cup final is played in London, Tokyo or New York. Consequently, camera positions are becoming increasingly similar and cuts are made in similar ways. Concretely, this is taken care of by having the major global events produced by the same people no matter where in the world they are taking place.

Does this mean a total homogenization of televised sport productions? If it was once possible to distinguish clearly between a northern European public service tradition emphasizing neutrality and journalism and an American commercial tradition emphasising entertainment, today the American model's influence can be noted in European sport productions. This is clearly to be seen in the way that commercial stations produce sport, like the ways TV3 and TV4 produce ice hockey and handball for Swedish audiences (Reimer 2002; Silk et al. 2000). The influence can also be found in the way that public service broadcasters produce sport. For the 2000 summer Olympics in Sydney, Swedish public service television created the programme *Hello Sydney*. The programme contained lots of sport from Sydney but the events were presented within the framework of a talk show, with the highlights from Sydney mixed with performances from well known Swedish artists.

However, there is always a historical-cultural level; a level dealing with the meaning of sport and televised sport in different contexts. Globalization pro-

cesses do not simply impact upon different nations in a uniform way. These nations have histories. And sport and television play different roles in these countries; roles that are not pre-given or essential but still significantly different. On the one hand, the way sport is treated on television is based on ideas on how it best fits within the national culture. Some sports are by definition closer to the heart of a national audience than others. At least, that is assumed. On the other hand, decisions made by individuals responsible for sport broadcasts can have far reaching consequences for the popularity of a particular sport, or for how sport is to be received by audiences. In Sweden, the decision to broadcast live English football, which started in 1969, both made Swedes into fans of British football clubs and it changed Saturday afternoon living habits in many Swedish households (Reimer 2004).

The distinction between a northern European public service model and a North American market model is still important. The basic premise, concerning responsibility, is radically different. A public service system is based on a responsibility towards all viewers; diversity and quality are key words. In a market system, the networks' responsibilities are primarily to owners and advertisers; high quality programmes that do not attract advertisers do not stay on the air. As a result of this, in Europe sport has been shown on television regularly whereas in the United States its presence has depended on the popularity of specific sports at particular points in time.¹⁶ Furthermore, European public service stations have attempted to present a broader picture of sport than have American networks, including also minority sports in their coverage. And in so doing, public service stations have taken a responsibility for sports as such. This, at least, is what Steven Barnett argues in the case of Britain. He writes that

a critical and decisive factor in the development of the sport/television relationship in the UK was a national, non-commercial and monopolistic broadcaster with an implicit responsibility for looking after the best interests of sport as well as the interests of the viewers. The absence of purely financial criteria allowed broadcasters to take decisions which were, in their view, not detrimental to the sports they televised (Barnett 1990, p. 21).

Thus, the differences between the two systems are fairly distinct. But, the point made by Barnett about the BBC taking responsibility for sport as such also shows that there are differences within the public service system. The Swedish broadcasting corporation has never seen it as its objective to help different sports. Instead, ever since the start of Swedish television, the choice of which sports to show has been based on professional decisions regarding the quality of and interest in each sport. If a sport thereby becomes invisible and finds it difficult to attract new competitors, then that is not the problem or responsibility of television, it is argued.

Why this difference? It has to do with the different role of sport in the two countries. Sport is of course part of culture in both countries. But in Sweden, sport is a physical and popular culture. Sport has been an important component in a state-directed, educational promotion of health for all citizens. Sport belongs within a nature context and the most popular athletes are athletes of the people. In Britain, the meaning of sport is more contested. There is a notion of sport as popular culture that resembles the situation in Sweden. But there is also a more narrow conceptualization of sport as high culture; sport is an important part of British culture and one of the things that has made Britain great. To give an example, in the government report 'Sport: Raising the Game from 1995, it says:

Sport is a central part of Britain's national heritage. We invented the majority of the world's great sports ... Sport is a binding force between generations and across borders. But, by a miraculous paradox, it is at the same time one of the defining characteristics of nationhood and of local pride. We should cherish it for both those reasons.

With these different views, it becomes easier to understand why the BBC early on promoted the main sporting events as important British events whereas in Sweden, while visible from the beginning, sport was not deemed important. In this, the role of sport on Swedish television actually resembled sport's role on early American television more than its role on British. As already stated, in the US, sport's role depended primarily on viewing figures. But, what is today often forgotten is that early American television had a class bias, leading to a disdainful view of sport:

William Paley at CBS and David Sarnoff at NBC were radio pioneers first and foremost; their first instinct upon finding themselves TV barons was to reward their greatest radio stars with new exposure on the new video curiosity.

Sports? Paley and Sarnoff weren't interested in sports, unless you count polo and golf. Sports was so – well, working class, except perhaps for the bowl games and the Derby, and maybe that thing with baseball in the autumn, the Series. (Powers 1984, p. 45) ¹⁷

Sport did not automatically move into the networks' prime time program schedules; it was too vulgar. And at both CBS and NBC sport was for a long time the responsibility of the networks' news divisions; divisions that did not conceive of sport as terribly important. This situation shares many similarities with that in Sweden.

Conclusion: televised sport and cultural change

The genre of sport is forever changing. At the moment, sport events often take the form of spectacle. This tendency is not surprising. To a certain extent it can be deduced from the logic of contemporary global, commercial deregulated television. In an attempt to attract as many viewers as possible, TV programmes need to be something special; they need to have that something that gives the viewers a guarantee of immediate satisfaction. And in order to guarantee this satisfaction, programmes need to have an ingredient of 'reality' – but a reality that is reshaped to fit viewer expectations of excitement, drama and – possibly – happy endings. And this is not exclusive to sport programmes. This is basically the same way that news is treated, or the way that experiences of 'real' people are remade into docu-dramas.

In the specific case of sport, this means that the actual sport event either takes a back seat to the events surrounding it – pre-game shows, opening ceremonies, commercials, etc. – or that the sport event is presented in a way that makes the experience of viewing it radically different from the experience of being present at the event. It also means that sports and athletes are presented in a sanitized way. There is an attempt to stay away from sport's darker sides; drugs, sexism, domestic violence, etc. The logic of television determines the television production rather than the logic of sport.

There is furthermore a tendency in which this television logic also impacts upon the event itself. All major American sport events are shown on American television. When there is a break in an event due to a time-out or an injury, commercials are shown, then the game cannot start again until the commercials are finished. Even more crucially, rules of the games are changed in order to make the games more appealing to viewers – meaning, primarily, making the games simpler and faster. Such a development is also increasingly visible in Europe.

I have discussed how the genre is changing. But I have also tried to make clear that it is necessary to take a concrete historical-cultural perspective on this change. It is taking place within widely different contexts. And these contexts matter; televised sport still looks quite different on Swedish, British and American television.

But these contexts are also changing. And the results of the changes are not always easy to predict. Swedish public service television has become more commercial due to the competition from other television stations; today sport on public service television in Sweden is mixed with entertainment in an attempt to attract a wider audience. That is only to be expected. But the sport division has also become better at carrying out critical news journalism. And this is to a large extent due to having competitors. The arrival of the commercially financed TV3 and TV4 has not only made the sport division more entertainment focused; it has also made the division sharper – more news focused.

Thus, even though sport has moved closer to entertainment, it has not turned into fiction. The events that are covered are 'real'; they probably would have occurred even if there were no cameras present. But the events are obviously affected by the presence of television and we can note that the genre of sport also has moved closer to drama. In themselves sport events contain pieces of drama; the events have a clear beginning and a clear end. These tendencies are now accentuated. Live events are becoming staged and through story telling athletes are portrayed as heroes and villains.

Historically, the fascination of televised sport has been based on its unpredictability (Morse 1983; Raunsbjerg 2001). In a new media environment, and within the framework of another logic, the expectation is that the fascination instead will come from experiencing something spectacular. The sport event becomes part of a larger concept, the objective being to make the televised sport event more fascinating than the sport event itself. To use a phrase from the rock group U2, it should be 'better than the real thing'. But it is also a question of making the televised sport event into something viewers can share with each other, something to talk about – and not just with sport fans. In this there are both a commercial and an empowering aspect. How these two aspects can be linked to each other is not self evident. The future of televised sport is unpredictable.

Notes

1. The concept of media event was coined by Dayan and Katz (1992).
2. For overviews of the international field of media sport research, see Kinkema and Harris (1998), Bernstein and Blain (2003), Gantz (2011).
3. The magazine category covers everything that is not live – sport news, documentaries, etc.
4. Much of the work presented in this article is based on the work carried out for my 2002 book *Uppspel. Den svenska TV-sportens historia* (Re-Play. The History of Sport on Swedish Television). The book is based on archival work at Swedish Television, on analyses of sport programmes and broadcasts, on interviews with more than 20 key figures in the history of Swedish televised sport, and on secondary analyses of previously gathered data (surveys, quantitative analyses of the TV output, etc).
5. As T. S. Eliot wrote, culture 'includes all the characteristic activities and interests of a people: Derby Day, Henley Regatta, Cowes, the twelfth of August, a cup final, the dog races, the pin table, the dart board, Wensleydale cheese, boiled cabbage cut into sections, beetroot in vinegar, nineteenth-century Gothic churches and the music of Elgar' (1948/1962, p. 31).
6. Sut Jhally (1989) speaks of this as the sports/media complex.
7. For another analysis of how the 1968 Olympics was covered, cf. Chisari (2002). The analysis focuses on the BBC coverage and manages almost completely to leave the political context behind.
8. Sometimes the processes involved go under the name of sportization. The processes 'involve the multilayered flow of sports, capital, personnel, technologies/landscapes and ideologies' (Maguire, 1999, p. 6). It may be added that also the commercialization of sport is an old phenomenon. Nineteenth-century amateurism is an 'invented tradition' (Pope, 1997, p. 19).
9. For an analysis of the contemporary European sport broadcasting market, cf. Evens and Lefever (2011).

10. It was actually due to the fact that the picture quality was so low that commentators were used initially on American television. In other words, the role of the commentator was not to analyze the event; it was a way making the visuals understandable altogether (Parente 1974).
11. In order to represent a three-dimensional event like sport on television, it is always necessary to dramatize. The question is *how* and for what purpose.
12. As the president of NBC put it: 'Story-telling is the absolute key ... even more important than who wins or loses ... We want to tell a story, tell it well and move on.' (Kinkema & Harris, 1998, p. 32).
13. Gina Daddario (1998) has analysed the productions of the Olympic games of 1992, 1994 and 1996. Her point is that the productions shared many characteristics with the traditionally female genres of melodramas and soaps, particularly in their focus on open narratives and on attempts to make possible viewer identification with the competing athletes.
14. Hesling calls these dynamizing strategies, 'because their main function is to make a game more dynamic and attractive, such as: a fast rhythm of cutting, slow motion pictures, replays, close-ups of star players, etc.' (1986, p. 187).
15. A particular case of when televised sport may give the viewer something extra is the watching of sport in pubs, and the emergence of 'the culture of pub supporting' (Turner, in press; Weed, 2007).
16. In the late 1940s and early 1950s, sport was highly visible on American primetime television, particularly in the form of boxing, wrestling and roller derby. In the mid 1950s, only boxing remained of these. Five years later, boxing also disappeared. Baseball was popular in the mid 1950s, but struggled in the 1960s (cf. Rader, 1984).
17. Paley was president of CBS, Sarnoff of NBC.

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Chapter 11

From Affluence to Poverty

The Early Swedish TV Documentary

Leif Furhammar

Introduction

When television was introduced in Sweden in the mid 1950s, documentaries were expected to play an especially important role in the coming activities. Consequently, during the rapid growth of the 1960s, the genre benefited from a series of structural and economic factors: it was professionalized and acquired self-esteem, popularity, and social prestige. At the same time, the documentary filmmakers became radicalized, and the genre found its centre of gravity and its strength in social criticism. The introduction of a second TV channel through the 1970 channel reform had a series of unintentional and adverse consequences, including a further politicization that led to aesthetic and narrative development being subordinated to ideological intentions. As a result, the genre suffered a loss of credibility, professionalism, attractiveness, self-esteem, and societal confidence. That paradox is the subject of this text. The chapter is to a large extent based on a more extensive study (Furhammar 1995).

The pioneer years

By the mid-1950s, the documentary film was practically extinct in Swedish cinemas. The inauguration of regular television broadcasts in the fall of 1956 opened up a completely new distribution channel for factual film. Suddenly there was a societal institution that provided funding and an audience for a growing film production with no demands for economic profit. The future looked bright for the genre and for the films. The high hopes were mutual. In early policy statements from the Swedish broadcasting corporation, Sveriges Radio (SR), documentary film is characterized as an especially exciting future concern of Swedish television (Sveriges Radio 1958: 102). The new medium considered live broadcasts and the use of electronics to be its primary distinc-

tive features, but for the time being found it necessary to make use of film's ability to register and preserve images of fluid reality.

At the outset, a special division was established within SR's TV organization, which came to be called the "Documentary Film Section". Its head, Lennart Ehrenborg, was recruited directly from the film industry. The name was somewhat misleading because almost every department within the company was soon producing its own documentary films.

The TV medium was new and untried; there were no ready-made templates to copy, and so for the most part it was necessary to build on experience from other areas. The early collection of documentary offerings was a diverse flora modelled on forms of public communication developed long before television. Unlike Denmark, where the State had been responsible for the production of documentary cinema since the 1930s, Sweden had no tradition of public-service documentaries to use as a reference or starting point when television began (Bondebjerg 2008: 31-33). In Norway, television broadcasting did not officially start until 1960, but then it followed a similar pattern as in Sweden (Diesen 2005: 65-83).

Nevertheless, in many respects the early history of documentary television can be seen as a continuation of the documentary cinema tradition. Technically, most productions were filmed like before, with silent film cameras. And like before, commentary, music, and any ambient sounds and effects were recorded separately and added later. In terms of subject matter, the repertoire often looked like a natural extension of the standard menu of cinema documentaries. Just like before, chatty film journeys were made to destinations near and far, and just like before miniature portraits were created of cities, provinces, businesses, and famous people. In the venerable and popular genre "wildlife and nature", Swedish TV documentaries were even at the international forefront. In 1957, Bertil Danielsson – a photographer at the Documentary Film Section – won the TV competition Prix Italia in the documentary category with a story about a bird titled *Viggen Viggo* (Viggo the Duck), an amusing trifle about a duckling that is raised by human beings and adapts to human surroundings. The silent images of Viggo's little adventures in the human world are overlaid with ambient sound and accompanied by a didactic, explanatory voice-over and an improvised guitar track with a Mickey Mousing feel.

Radio was at least as crucial an influence as cinematic film. The new medium was organizationally subsumed under SR, with the result that both staff and programme values were largely taken from there. The situation was identical in Denmark and, subsequently, in Norway (Söndergaard 1994: 15; Diesen 2005: 37).

Early Swedish television documentaries are characterized by an almost uninterrupted flow of words, denser and more loaded with information than ever was the case in the cinema documentaries. The words bear the messages and determine the meanings; the images are the words' servants. Many of the

producers and narrators had professional backgrounds in radio and brought along programme ideas, means of presentation, and speech rhythms from their old medium. Here, as in Denmark (Bondebjerg 2008: 12 f), radio had long seen itself as having the implicit national duty to provide citizens with a multi-faceted picture of the country through intimate reportage about its different regions and inhabitants. Enhanced by the addition of images, the tradition could now move into the realm of TV.

One rhetorical figure more than any other connects the early TV documentaries with the tradition of radio, namely the interview, which had been very scarce in the older documentaries for the cinema. As in radio, the interview came to be a characteristic and dominant feature of the TV documentaries, using the close-up as a natural pictorial complement. Equally well-suited for electronic studio production as for film, the portrait interview quickly became a robust and cherished programme format within television. This type of programme is of significant general historical interest (oral history) and a good many fascinating personalities of the older generation were documented during the early years of TV: original characters from the ranks of the people as well as prominent public figures.

A third source of influence was the press. According to a 1962 study, virtually all TV producers and reporters with societal coverage assignments had experience of daily press journalism (Ag & Söderström 1962: 128). The daily news show *Aktuellt* – the extension of the newsreel into the TV age – mixed journalistic traditions from radio, film, and the daily press. The current affairs office was also responsible for visual documentary journalism of a more elaborate nature. It was there, in 1956, that Swedish television had its first scoop, when the celebrated medical professors Herbert Olivecrona and Clarence Crafoord, each in his own programme, not only let themselves be portrayed, but also carried out complicated surgery in front of the camera, the one on a brain and the other on a blue baby's heart. The TV chief personally introduced and interviewed them, and with a mixture of amazement and horror, the Swedish people were able to peer into the cut-open bodies and witness such things as the musculature of the bared heart pulsing in time with the heart-lung machine.

In the foreign-affairs programme *Panorama*, journalists provided factual and emotion-free commentary on the week's world events, illustrating their presentations with footage of their own or with features from international news agencies. Alongside this strictly current-affairs journalism, travel features were aired depicting foreign countries, occasionally in-depth examinations of forms of life and conditions abroad, but more often chatty tourist movies with no other purpose than to give viewers the impression of taking a guided tour on the spot.

The reporting on domestic social issues was relatively mild at first, but in 1958 Karl-Axel Sjöblom and Lars Ag launched the hard-hitting social reportage series

Strövtåg (Ramble). It was expressly planned to be a counterpart of the evening press's social indignation series. Each episode had two obligatory ingredients: (a) a person in trouble; and (b) rigid public authorities and institutions to be brought to account. Sjöblom and Ag travelled around the country finding a great number of shocking human tragedies – victims of the housing shortage, traffic, health-care bureaucracy, etc. – and confronted negligent politicians, officials, and organizations with them. The series stimulated intense debate, but was factual and balanced in accordance with the conventions of the time.

During the first half of the 20th century, Sweden had a thriving adult education tradition in which popularly acclaimed speakers toured the country lecturing on diverse subjects. This tradition naturally moved into the new medium alongside the others. It was not uncommon for early documentaries to take the form of an illustrated lecture, with the speaker more or less informally positioned before the camera as if at lecture desk in an auditorium. In this didactic role he could resemble a foreign policy commentator (or, for that matter, Karl-Axel Sjöblom, who liked to introduce his “Rambles” sitting before the camera reading from his script), but he defended his subjectivity and his license as an entertainer. He (always a he) illustrated his talk by showing viewers objects, as well as pictures and snippets of film, and commenting upon them. At its best, the lecture documentary had high information density and entertainment value. Many of the country's most charismatic speakers took part. They personally answered for their knowledge and opinions, and with their subjectivity and physicality and their familiar style of address, they came across as clearly identifiable senders of their message. They stood in stark contrast to the classic narrator of the genre, who was invisible, incorporeal, impersonal.

The most spectacular manifestation of the lecture format was the fifteen-episode series *Liv och leverne i Gamla Sverige* (Life in Old Sweden), 1957-59, with cultural historian Gustaf Näsström acting as a cicerone through the ages, from the inland ice until the 18th century. It is a lavishly prioritized, first-class production with no efforts and no props being spared. Näsström himself is the central figure, not only as a guide but as an eye-catcher. He performs with delightedly introspective enthusiasm, animated and relaxed. His erudition seems inexhaustible, but unlike the narrative ideal espoused by the current affairs reporters, his presentation of facts is strongly coloured by his personality. The cinematic design is painstakingly planned in advance with carefully conceived cinematography and with lighting design that by the standards of later times appears quite artificial. The lighting does not merely serve a decorative function, however, but is there to lend three-dimensionality and a relief effect to the objects.

In its childhood, Swedish television had the implicit mission to serve as a national and familiar coordinating force. The early TV documentary was strictly neutral when it came to opinions. Hence it fit well with the era's ideals of media virtue – child-approved and unshocking.

And so a few years passed. Sweden changed. Television changed. The documentary formats soon coupled unabashedly with each other.

The progressive sixties

The greater part of the 1960s was a time of prosperity in Sweden. In the midst of the economic boom, endowed with ever more plentiful resources, television thrived and changed, and grew in popularity.

Within a few years TV became the main medium, that which all the others commented upon. During the 1960s the viewer base, measured in number of licenses, grew from 800,000 to 2,400,000 (*Hört och sett* 1974: 309). Its economic resources increased dramatically. Contrary to the forecasts, the position of film vis-à-vis electronics was strengthened. The documentaries were able to appropriate a sizable portion of the resources and became the very backbone of the societal reporting. Production developed smoothly and without bureaucratic obstacles. The audience situation was ideal. Viewers had a single channel to watch, and watched it all the more. The Swedish people seemingly thirsted for moving pictures. It was not uncommon for a prime-time documentary to reach two million viewers. The reactions were generally very positive (Ivre 1969: 184).

The conditions for documentary film were rapidly professionalized. The technical equipment reached previously unimagined levels of performance. The new camera models were easy to operate, portable, and quiet. Low-light varieties of raw film stock became available, making it possible to shoot in environments not previously possible. The recently developed pilot-tone technology for linking camera and sound allowed for practically trouble-free synchronized sound-recording in the field. Acoustically, film came alive. Technological developments enabled new choices of subject matter and led to an aesthetic reorientation. TV documentaries adopted a different visual style than had been cultivated in cinema films. Camera positions often had to be chosen on the spur of the moment; now other visual qualities were more essential than balanced composition and perfect focus. What was sacrificed for the sake of speed could be compensated for by shooting a lot of film and afterwards constructing a convincing picture of reality. The creative responsibility of editors grew. In 1963, SR began offering a three-year advanced course in editing unparalleled in the world.

During the early 1960s, the Documentary Film Section was the leading centre of the genre. It was above all there that the traditional cinematographic ideals were cultivated, yet there was also an openness for aesthetic experimentation and innovation, for moving pictures as form, for the documentary as art.

As head of the section, Lennart Ehrenborg made use of an original recruitment policy. He reduced the permanently employed staff to a minimum in

order instead to throw open the doors to more or less experienced freelance filmmakers who were offered various forms of technical and professional support, raw film stock, laboratory costs, etc. As much as four-fifths of the yearly production was contracted out to independent filmmakers.

Ehrenberg strongly affirmed traditional visual aesthetics, and it is telling that the section inaugurated a fruitful collaboration with the country's leading photographers' collective, the association "Ten Photographers", which during the course of a few years produced a wide-range of skilfully made documentaries covering a variety of topics from music and art to nature and foreign cultures.

Inspiration for renewal was not least sought in international developments. At the beginning of the 1960s, the British Free Cinema movement stood out above all others as a documentary model to be followed. Their ideals concerning production policy harmonized with Ehrenborg's ambition to encourage talented amateur filmmakers to take simple technical equipment and use it to conquer reality. They sought out known but seldom documented environments; they filmed open-mindedly and intimately, without judging or even commenting upon what they saw. With the winds from the Free Cinema, a spontaneous and sensual joy of discovery swept through the Swedish repertoire. Everything was worth documenting: life aboard a passenger ferry, the bustle of a restaurant kitchen, a day at a surgery clinic, crowds at an open-air market.

Shortly after Free Cinema, the American stylistic orientation "Direct Cinema" (above all in Richard Leacock's version) became very influential. It too spurned all didactic ambitions. Filmmakers should strive to make their presence as imperceptible as possible and refrain from superimposing their own values onto the events. Direct Cinema had a more purposeful documentary strategy than Free Cinema and was above all interested in studying dynamic processes, social events, and crises, rather than states of being.

The first Swedish example arrived in 1963 with the filming of a four-hour revival meeting of the ecstatic Free Church movement Maranata. The event was filmed with several cameras and then edited down to a forty-five minute concentrate, without commentary, titled *Tro, tro, tro* (Faith, Faith, Faith). Free of charge, the filmmakers received the elaborate dramaturgy of the meeting, the ecstatic exhibitionism, and the spectacular speaking in tongues, and the result was an outstanding documentary drama, a masterpiece of editing technique, and a study of sociology of religion. The programme came as a shock to many, but from that point on the Swedish public had to accept that television no longer intended to refrain from disturbing and upsetting viewers and informing them about unpleasant facts (Thurén 1997: 213).

An implicit conflict was built into the meeting between antididactic currents and the inherited tradition within the Documentary Film Section. The cultural history topics that from the beginning had been so well-received had openly didactic goals, of course – as did several other categories of documentaries.

The lecture format, which had been so prominent at first, was now considered anachronistically authoritarian, and over the course of a few years it went through a discrete metamorphosis in three stages. (1) The speaker stepped down from his elevated position at the lecture desk, but still was visible in freer forms. (2) He disappeared from the frame but was still present in the form of his own voice being on the soundtrack. (3) His voice was replaced by a professional (omniscient) narrator. The authoritative aspect remained, but in a depersonalized and camouflaged form. What on the surface appeared to be an anti-authoritarian process actually left the door open for more covert manipulations. This shift was to typify much of the coming years' increasingly politicized documentary practice.

Without political motives, the cultural history programmes coming out of the Documentary Film Section almost invariably employed a pedagogical voice-over rhetoric combined with elaborate visual aesthetics. Their premier productions culminated in the project *Abu Simbel* (1966-68), personally led by Lennart Ehrenborg to document UNESCO's archaeological rescue operation in connection with the construction of the Aswan High Dam in Egypt. For several years, Ehrenborg and his photographers followed the various stages of the almost inconceivable project to move Ramses II's stone temple out of the danger zone surrounding the construction site. The film *Abu Simbel* is in itself a great accomplishment, achieving cinematographic power through the visually overwhelming play of contrasts between the monumental scale of the undertaking and close-up details. It instructively and graphically depicts the entire process – dismantling the gigantic statues by sawing them into sandstone blocks, transporting them, and rebuilding them. *Abu Simbel* represents a high-water mark within the history of the didactic documentary.

A lively discussion was underway in the Documentary Film Section about form, content, and documentary ethics, which found its clearest expression in the films of Eric M Nilsson. Ehrenborg allowed Nilsson wide creative license, and Nilsson handled the freedom with a level of integrity and formal mastery that won him a unique position in Swedish TV and film history. His films have an intellectual design that can best be described as essayistic. Several of his films from the 1960s demonstrate a methodically implemented metacritical attitude toward the genre's authoritarian language of knowledge and truth. Such goals would soon be very uncommon among the documentary filmmakers of the late 1960s, who over time increasingly aimed to be persuasive.

Cultural history soon lost its position at the leading edge of documentary development. In the general radicalization that took hold in the later 1960s it came to be regarded as non-socially minded. In the new documentary climate, even the artistic and metacritical ambitions of the Documentary Film Section rapidly became a programme-policy encumbrance. Alongside the activities within the Documentary Film Section, there was a growing body of documentary

filmmakers who were not particularly interested in traditional artistic aspects, but were all the more concerned with journalistically effective presentation. Along with their ever greater mastery of the means of expression, a strong sense of self confidence developed among the corps of documentary filmmakers. In the mid-1960s Swedish television took a leading position in the public social sphere. At the same time the entire Swedish media landscape went through a shift to the left. This was noticeable within all sectors of television, as well as in radio, newspapers, film, and theatre. Swedish television both followed and led the trend. The TV documentary became contentious and socially critical, and pushed the limits of freedom of expression.

This new attitude did meet with resistance from various quarters of society, but the pressing back of limits proceeded steadily in a balanced consensus with the surrounding society. The limits were set by the Radio Board (*radio-nämnden*), the State body with the task of overseeing SR's compliance, when exercising its broadcasting rights, with the Radio Transmission Act's requirements of objectivity and impartiality. The Board represented a reasonably progressive view of freedom of expression in the media monopoly, and for the greater part of the 1960s the Radio Board maintained a steady pace of liberalization together with the radicalized documentary film. A decisive early victory for freedom came in 1960 when the Radio Board declared that one side in a dispute cannot prevent a programme from being aired simply by not showing up – even if this would formally violate the requirement of impartiality (Ag and Söderström 1962: 33). A further victory came somewhat later when it was established that the balance between different opinions and values did not necessarily need to be maintained in every individual programme, as long as it was upheld in the supply of programmes as a whole. A method often used to create such a balance was to hold a televised debate in connection with a controversial documentary, and invite the injured party to participate.

To judge by Danish and Norwegian historical writings, documentary films in Sweden's neighbouring countries were kept under tighter rein, with more explicit regulations, tighter control, and stricter requirements of objectivity (Bondebjerg 2008: 317 ff; Diesen 2005: 140).

In Sweden in the late 1960s, politics played an increasingly central role in the practice of documentary filmmaking. In the summer of 1968, a counterpart to the French student revolt occurred in Stockholm, when for several days a group of leftist students "occupied" their own student union and staged a spectacular disturbance. Rumours of the occupation reached the TV factual programming office who scrambled a team on short notice. The team provided news reporting on the events, and afterwards carried out extensive documentation of the whole course of events in the style of Direct Cinema. As an account of an isolated and conflict-laden social event, *Kårhusockupationen* (The Student Union Occupation) can be compared with the Maranata film, and today the film is

a unique document about a unique occurrence in contemporary history. As a journalistic documentary film it was a triumph. There was nothing unlawful about the actual presentation, but because it depicted events “dangerous to society” the film was seen in some quarters not as an objective documentation but as a manifestation of covert leftist activism. In years to come TV would be increasingly criticized for favouring the Left merely by giving publicity to their actions and demonstrations.

The old connections with radio continued to be of vital importance for the TV documentary’s development. From radio, the tradition was carried over of systematically portraying the variegated character, regional lifestyles, and cultural diversity of contemporary Swedish society. Together, these fragments would fit together into a map of Swedish society, over time as well. Even this turned out to contain political dynamite.

An early prototype is Ingrid Samuelsson’s *Så går en dag i Linneryd* (A typical day in Linneryd). Samuelsson belonged to the classical describers of Sweden in radio and she brought her ability to connect with people to the new medium with an ease that seemed entirely unaffected by the change of technology. The film is an intimate portrait of a small Swedish community in 1962. From a wide birds-eye view she describes the overall layout of the town only to then dive into the daily life of Linneryd. She is invisible, yet her presence is highly felt. Through her we get to know the public infrastructure, the small-scale social network, the collective daily rhythm, working life and free-time associations, the general as well as the regionally specific. This is how things are done at the school, the sawmill, the bakery, the post office. Through Samuelsson’s inquisitive encounters, we become acquainted with the entire population of the district. Everyone says they are satisfied with life, even the women with the most monotonous jobs. No dissatisfaction is to be found. But then someone mentions that in a few days the dairy will be shut down. It is as if a shadow suddenly falls across the film. The tone changes. This is before the time of the great structural rationalizations, but a vague unease permeates everything and everyone, an awareness of the closures and centralizations unavoidably to come.

Soon similar reports will capture how optimism evaporates and dejection sets in throughout the transformed Sweden. From the mid-1960s there is a surge of films attempting to document whatever can be rescued from rural areas facing depopulation, urban neighbourhoods being torn down, cultural milieus that are disappearing, ways of living and working that are on their way to being forgotten. Taken together, the documentaries on life in Sweden in the 1960s convey the image of a welfare state in transformation or decline. From the depictions of the disappearing Sweden, there emerges a documentary message about negligence, oppression, and poverty, about exploitation of people and environments, about powerlessness and oppressive power. The documentaries

began to demolish the image of Swedish society as exceptional. At the same time new programmes dealt with critical aspects of mental health care, alcohol policy, municipal politics, the penal system, and the environment – at first with due deference to the requirements of impartiality and politeness decreed from above, but over time in an ever more indignant and provocative tone.

The social affairs editorial office started a documentary division to produce sensational analyses of social conditions, under the generic title *Dokument* (Documents). In 1965, “Dokument” provided a startling glimpse into the dark recesses of the narcotics slums, an early demonstration of the ability of new filmmaking technology to penetrate into environments previously considered unreachable by the camera. The Swedish people were outraged by the shocking images, perhaps even more by the fact that they were allowed to be shown at all. The Radio Board had already indicated that Swedish TV had the right to show shocking images of reality.

In 1966 “Dokument” delivered a death-blow to Sweden’s self-image as a moral ideal for the world to follow, with the piece *Svart vecka i Nimba* (Black week in Nimba). A film team happened to be on assignment in Liberia when a strike unexpectedly broke out at the Swedish-owned mining concern Lamco. The film team immediately rescheduled their plans in order to document the sensational continuation. They were able to graphically show how the management, with what appeared to be outright colonial methods, called in the country’s army and police to crush the strike. The camera follows along as the strike leaders and their families are evicted from their homes and are driven into the bush in a humiliating fashion.

We now find ourselves very far from the ideal of refraining from value judgments. The camera follows as much of the sequence of events as it can keep up with, but still only manages to document fragments. Situations are contextualized by an anonymous voice-over that clearly sides with the workers’ version of events. The arguments are supported by interviews with several people involved. The embarrassed vacillation of the local manager amounts to an implicit rhetorical argument for the workers’ side.

The film generated an enormous response and cast Lamco and its Swedish parent company, Grängesbergbolaget, in an unfavourable light. The parent company launched an attack on SR, accusing the film team of 29 violations of the objectivity and impartiality requirements. Representatives of Lamco in Sweden were invited to two (!) televised debates about the programme, and with the balance this provided, the Radio Board found nothing of substance to object to in the film (Thurén 1997: 190–211, Hadenius 1998: 312).

Svart vecka i Nimba was considered in many quarters to be an attack on the entire Swedish business sector. It was the first sign of a brewing storm leading to numerous attacks on the conduct of Swedish companies abroad. Their documentary impact was often strengthened with an insinuating tone of

voice and ironic visual compositions, but for the time being the Radio Board played along.

In the years around 1960, Swedish TV had made a number of lavishly produced, uncritical travel documentaries in foreign countries such as South Africa, Spain, India, and Israel. They were all regime friendly and balanced in the sense that they did not challenge the prevailing conceptions of Swedish public opinion. Around 1964, with surprising force, the new provocative and probing way of reporting on foreign countries burst onto Swedish TV, to the dismay of Swedish audiences. The touristic features of the genre disappeared entirely. In the middle of the decade, several film teams travelled around India and Pakistan producing haunting images of catastrophes, floods, droughts, adversity, and hopelessness. The immediacy of life and death in the Far East came as a wake-up call for many Swedes. The filmmakers made no attempt to conceal their anger about the miserable conditions they documented.

1964 also witnessed the first truly bewildering attack on TV viewers' conceptions about the USA: Bob Elfström's documentary series *Onkel Toms söner* (Uncle Tom's Sons), about tensions between White and Black America. With untypical vehemence, Elfström took sides with the blacks, by which he demonstrated that the requirement of objectivity sometimes stands in contrast with that of impartiality. The images were dense, expressive, and emotionally breathtaking, and included an ecstatic church service with a black congregation. The comments exhibited a rhetorical brilliance unlike anything previously heard on Swedish TV, and much of the emotional power derived from the selection of music. Folk singer Pete Seeger almost takes on the role of commentator at times, and the tones of "We shall overcome" are used to lend deep resonance to the depiction of the Civil Rights Movement.

In the years to come, Sweden's image of America would be transformed beyond recognition by the TV documentaries' consistently government-critical attitude. The USA was in a turbulent period of moral, political, and ethnic conflict, offering many rewarding topics for films to represent and comment upon. The USA was, without competition, the single most often depicted country in Swedish TV documentaries during the second half of the 1960s. This constant criticism of the USA was, according to its detractors, a flagrant symptom of television's leftist bias.

Throughout nearly the entire 1960s the tension between the permissible and the provocative had been a creative stimulus. However toward the end of the decade it began to be clear that documentary freedom had its limits. One of the most violent controversies concerned Eric M Nilsson's 1968 film *En skola* (A School), about methods and values in the Waldorf educational system. The film was a probing depiction of a school in Stockholm, and its design used visual language and editing techniques that, together with a strident, first-person narrator voice, clearly conveyed a personal and extremely

critical perspective on the subject. Eric M Nilsson uses the word “sect” to describe the pedagogy.

En skola was an expression of Eric M Nilsson’s general antipathy toward authoritarian knowledge and truth claims. Ironically enough, *En skola* was officially criticized in the strongest possible terms by the Radio Board for having disregarded the requirements of impartiality and objectivity (Vängby 1971: 191 f.).

The verdict came to be as controversial as the film itself. Arguments for and against the right to documentary subjectivity were debated intensely. More or less the same arguments would, a few months later, surround Bo Bjelfvenstam’s 1969 documentary about Berlin, *Den döende staden* (The Dying City). The film’s egregious and visually manipulative criticism of Western capitalism was so blatant that it was viewed in some quarters as communist propaganda. The Radio Board criticized this film also, justifying the verdict with the fact that the film was advertised as a documentary, which according to the Board should guarantee an objective method of presentation (Vängby 1971: 201 ff.). The judgments against the two films led to the expression “documentary film” becoming taboo for a time in the language of television.

The Radio Board’s verdicts were symptomatic of the toughening climate. The limits of freedom of expression had been stretched to the bursting point. As the end of the decade approached, society’s irritation about the leftist bias in TV had grown ever stronger.

In the midst of this tense situation, a revolutionary reorganization of television was about to occur. In 1966 parliament had decided that a second TV channel would be established, based in Stockholm and starting 1 January 1970.

The divided seventies

The new TV organization was a result of the peaking Swedish economic boom, the “record years” of the second half of the sixties. SR was directed by parliament henceforth to run twin TV channels “in stimulating competition”, TV1 and TV2. With this duplication, the enormous increases in resources that accompanied the assignment, and the considerable new recruitment of personnel it entailed, Sweden was to receive a powerful and richly varied television service. Politically, the reorganization was justified with noble words such as diversity and increased freedom of choice. The state authorities assumed that the sharply increased airtime allotted to societal, cultural, news, and political programmes would lead to stronger and more comprehensive societal coverage and a strengthening of democracy. For practical reasons, the channel reform was coordinated with the official launching of colour TV in 1970 (Hadenius 1998: 223)

Not much went according to plan. But before we go into the miscalculations, let us take note of a few instances where the high hopes did manage to be fulfilled.

The period around 1970 was in fact the heyday of open and fearless social journalism on TV. This was when the Swedish working class and their thoughts about society achieved some visibility on television. This was when TV made the Swedish people aware of environmental threats, the population explosion, and national liberation movements, the time when Swedish television reached farther out into the world than ever before and dared to take risks.

The most remarkable accomplishment of Swedish television in the 1970s consisted of its documentary reporting from the third world. The films about the Vietnam War attracted the most attention. The very first western TV filmmakers to be allowed into North Vietnam during the war were Swedish. Three film teams from Sweden were responsible for creating unique and unsettling documentaries that were licensed to TV corporations and aired throughout the world. One of the teams filmed in Hanoi during the 1972 American bombings and documented the bicycle culture and one-man bomb-shelters in the streets that throughout the world became symbols of the population's spirit of resistance, determination to fight, and resilience.

The Vietnam War overshadowed most everything else in the world in the early 1970s. Nevertheless throughout the third world, wherever liberation movements were engaged in guerrilla operations against colonialism and oppression, there was a good chance that Swedish documentary filmmakers were on the scene. Often they were invited by the rebel side. Without this reporting we would scarcely know more about the situation in the world than the official and censored truths emanating from the established ministries of information. These films invariably sympathized with the popular liberation struggles. Because such loyalty was a condition for filming, the perspective was inevitably one-sided and the narrative scenarios were similar from film to film. This monotony ultimately led to oversaturation; the systematic partisanship generated doubts about the genre's credibility.

Among the many examples of the international presence of Swedish documentary filmmakers in the 1970s, one stands out as unforgettable. In 1973 *Santiago våldtagen stad* (Santiago, A City Raped) depicted the appalling experiences of the military coup – the presidential assassination, the destruction, the purges, terror, and witch-hunts; the death squads and corpses lining the streets; the football stadium turned concentration camp and refugees seeking asylum at the Swedish embassy; the desperation of the oppressed and the victorious attitude of the oppressors.

Of all the *domestic* topics to which Swedish documentary filmmakers turned their attention in the 1970s, life in sparsely-populated parts of the country was their favourite, because here converged the symbols of everything they sup-

ported and everything they opposed. Here could be found worn-out people deprived of their livelihoods and human worth, as well as traces of predatory capitalism and heartless market forces; but here could also be found what remained of a more natural and wholesome way of life. It provided material for both militant rage and ethnographic tenderness.

It was a triumph for TV1 on New Years Day 1970 to be able to present *Fårödokument* (Fårö Document), Ingmar Bergman's documentary debut. It was nothing short of sensational that Sweden's leading director of feature films created for television a loving portrait of a province that at the same time was a fierce attack on the Swedish regional development policy's betrayal of rural areas.

Two members of the new generation of documentary filmmakers, Ebbe Gilbe and Rainer Hartleb, treated the reality of Swedish daily life with greater care and affection than the others and managed to convey dimensions of depth and time that surpassed the reach of the prevailing Social Realism. Gilbe, who was probably the most original young documentary talent to emerge with the channel split and possessed a precise sense of the aesthetic values of black-and-white film and the emotional nuances of grey tones, depicted in film after film the remnants of the old poverty-stricken Sweden with humour and sorrow and free from illusions. Above all Rainer Hartleb has earned his place in the history of documentary film with the life-long suite of films *Barnen från Jordbro* (The Children from Jordbro). It began in 1972, when he made a film about a first-grade class at a suburban school outside Stockholm. In itself it was already a unique documentation of everyday life in an environment both unique and commonplace at the same time. Hartleb went on to follow the same group over the years in film after film, in which we see the children grow up, become adults, choose their paths in life, have children of their own... This as yet unfinished (?) project is Swedish TV's most remarkable long-term venture ever, a dazzlingly rich documentary and a work of sociological research without many academic parallels.

Thus there were a few documentary successes to be found in the early stages of the channel split, but the disappointments soon came to dominate the evaluations of the new system. The hopes that a two-channel system in itself would strengthen democracy evaporated when it emerged that the audience had learned to "ride slalom" between the channels and avoid community bulletins and civic schooling in favour of more enjoyable offerings (Holmbäck 1975: 4-12). The availability of programming on society and politics had more or less doubled with the channel split, but the viewership of factual programmes quickly dropped by half! (Hadenius 1998: 224). The shrinking interest hit documentary films particularly hard; soon the high viewer ratings of the 1960s were nothing but a memory.

The recruitment of new personnel in connection with the channel split took place at a time when socialist ideas were extremely widespread among the

media-oriented public that now applied for jobs. The radical political influence was hence even greater than it had been with only a single channel, especially in the field of documentary film. This tendency was strengthened by the fact that even the group of veteran producers became noticeably more radicalized after 1968 (Engblom 1998: 138). This leftist orientation spread throughout the entire span of television programming, even to entertainment, culture, drama, and children's programmes.

The stage was set for conflict, and not more than a week or so after the channel split a frontal collision occurred between the new channels and the establishment in society. In December 1969, a wildcat strike broke out among miners at the Lapland ore-fields owned by the mining corporation LKAB. It was to last for 16 weeks. Both TV1 and TV2, as well as radio, devoted a disproportionate amount of resources to reporting on the strike: 640 items in 521 programmes, according to SR's own statistics (*Hört och sett* 1974:300 f). Just as in the case of *Kårhusockupationen* (The Student Union Occupation), the excessive media coverage in itself was viewed as an act of taking sides. TV appeared to be an active participant in the events, and the fact that the reporting and features from the ore-fields almost invariably seemed to take the side of the strikers exacerbated the earlier crisis of confidence between ether media and the establishment – employers, the union movement, popular movements, political parties, the government (Hadenius 1998: 248f). It was a bad omen.

TV2 had received the greater part of the new recruits and was soon seen as the “red” channel. When TV2 was started, it exhibited an enthusiastic sense of community, frankly declaring its intention to change society. The documentaries were seen as the channels' specific flagships. In harmony with the spirit of the times, TV2's organizational structure afforded employees a large amount of influence. Programming decisions and policy were to a great extent delegated to large meetings and planning committees characterized by strong leftist peer pressure. I belonged to the 1970 crop of new recruits, and in what follows I include personal experiences as one source of information among others. Early on, TV2 staked out a profile for itself by devoting an hour each evening to untitled, so-called “Direct-Programmes” from the factual programming office. These primarily consisted of documentaries treating currently polarized topics of debate, and broadcasting decisions were made at the last minute. In terms of audience, this venture was a major miscalculation; it was difficult to produce attractive marketing for programming without titles or information in advance. The enormity of the undertaking to deliver a new Direct-Hour each day inevitably led to quality being sacrificed for the sake of speed. After about a year the project was cancelled. The failure of the Direct-Project was a serious setback for documentary film.

TV1 was the channel that most resembled the old-style television. It was also dominated to a large degree by the left, but had a greater selection of

entertainment programmes and overall a more flashy repertoire than TV2. Even so, it was a documentary undertaking on TV1 that occasioned the first truly serious political scandal. In the 1971 series *Från socialism till ökad jämlikhet* (From Socialism to Greater Equality), the young producers Carl Slättne and Hans O Sjöström depicted the history of the reformist workers movement in Sweden as an out-and-out betrayal of the cornerstones of socialist thought; Social Democracy and the unions had corrupted the class struggle through class collaboration and constant compromises with capitalism. In terms of documentary form the series belongs to the older cultural history tradition with authoritative narrator, interviews about people's memories, still images, archival footage, and old audio recordings. However parts of the series exhibit a brash and at times arrogant repudiation of Social Democracy's historical choices. Political history is commented upon in insinuating tones, with provocative wordings, clever visual gags, and even newly composed variety-show songs. This onslaught against Social Democracy received even more momentum that same fall, when TV2 aired the satirical play *Har du hört vad som hänt?* (Have you heard what's happened?), which attacked the trade-union movement as well, using underhanded methods.

Society reacted with furious criticism and outrage. Once again the anger came from the trade-union movement and of course from the Social Democratic Party, but also from numerous other organizations and groups across the political spectrum all of which saw the leftist media bias as a growing threat to society. This time there was also internal criticism from SR's management and from the Radio Board, which did not stop at stigmatizing the partisan standpoint of the series, but also appointed several investigations in which historical experts castigated the documentary's deviations from traditional historiography (Thurén 1997: 220-258).

The Radio Board's reaction was a serious signal from society, and there was more to come. Complaints to the Radio Board tripled at the beginning of the 1970s, and primarily concerned television programmes. In addition, the Board took the initiative to perform its own investigations on numerous occasions, a further sign of growing vigilance or even suspicion. The number of verdicts resulting in official censure increased (Djerf-Pierre & Weibull 2001: 266).

Already by fall 1971, TV was facing broad criticism from more or less all segments of official Sweden, and through SR's Board of Directors they demanded that stricter control be exerted by channel management (Hadenius 1998: 254 f). No further dramatic measures were taken for the time being, and the resulting atmosphere of hostility instead increased the documentary filmmakers' socially critical aggression. In Denmark and Norway, the 1970s were also a time of radicalization and confrontations with the political establishment, though without the fateful conflicts that hit Swedish television as a result of the two-channel system (Söndergaard 1994: 20 f, Diesen 2005: 141-147). These

neighbouring countries did not receive second channels until the end of the 1980s, by which time the wave of leftism had ebbed out.

The two-channel system was fraught with consequences for the development and quality of TV documentaries in Sweden in several respects. 72 people were recruited to be trained as producers in connection with the channel split. The new employees took a six-month advanced course to learn to handle tools and expressive techniques (Engblom 1998: 134). However a remarkable number of both the new and established documentary filmmakers chose to express themselves in a rather drab formal idiom, which they justified as being simple and clear, and therefore accessible to common people. One of the Left's puritanical traits in the 1970s was that on the whole they viewed questions of form as ostentatious and empty show. Some of the filmmakers respected plainness to a harmful degree. They saw themselves as siding with the people and being at their level, but it quickly became apparent that their love of the people was scantily reciprocated. This insight gradually penetrated even to the most militant leftists. One of the radical producers summed it up self-critically as follows: "We've become wooden and have lost our vision. We're stuck in one spot; we aren't developing and I believe the audience is bored by us" (Bergmark 1978: 128).

As we have seen, the word "documentary" had been banned for a time from the language of Swedish television as a result of the Radio Board's somewhat questionable requirement of objectivity. According to the prevailing philosophy among the filmmakers, objectivity was in principle not achievable, and because no absolute truth could be attained, subjectivity – concerning politics for example – could be pushed quite far as long as one took the precaution of clearly indicating the standpoint taken. Their disobedience stood out. In employment interviews all of them had declared themselves willing to respect SR's obligation to be impartial, regardless of their own opinions (Engblom 1998: 132 f).

Not all TV employees accepted this leftist orientation. The discontent among the producers was exacerbated by internal frictions. When the internal and external conflicts came to a head in 1974, the management of TV2 finally took formal disciplinary action against eleven of the most militant producers – mostly documentary filmmakers. The once so exhilarating sense of community at the channel gave way to depression and despondency. In 1974 the financial situation for both channels also took a turn for the worse. The previously generous economic conditions were replaced by an austerity budget causing immediate adverse effects on programming. Business-economic arguments were put forward to justify the cutbacks, but internally they were understood as a punishment for disobedience (Hadenius 1998: 244; Tjernström 1999: 173-200).

The selection of documentary films, which had been the very backbone of the programme offerings, became narrower and narrower. The independent documentary activities began to be anonymized, and the individual filmmakers

increasingly moved to established production offices and magazine programmes. Low-cost studio discussions became the preferred form of societal coverage. It was cheaper to sit and talk about reality than to show it.

* * *

A few words should finally be said about how the introduction of colour TV affected the documentary genre in the initial years following the channel split. Colour meant a great deal for the attractiveness of the medium as a whole. Electronically produced programmes were invariably aired in colour – talk shows, sports, studio debates, the greater part of all entertainment programmes and televised theatre. But it took considerably longer for the majority of filmed productions to be able to switch from black and white to colour.

Some parts of the documentary film repertoire truly benefited from the advantages of colour. The genre of nature films acquired a new lustre that was put to good use by such masters as Jan Lindblad and Arne Sucksdorff. However colour did not solely entail benefits for documentary film as a whole. Colour film required more light, more time, and more involved preparations than black and white to achieve acceptable results. Hence it was rather ill-suited for the type of investigative documentary journalism that had produced the genre's great triumphs in the 1960s. For the time being, colour film was still considerably more expensive than black and white, and documentaries depended on large amounts of raw film stock, a disadvantage that became increasingly apparent when the budget cuts hit. Most documentary films were therefore shot and aired in black and white, even after the advent of colour television. This led to a psychologically problematic hierarchy arising between colour and black and white. Colour was new and attractive, and was associated with what was enjoyable about TV. Black-and-white programmes dropped in relative entertainment value, which further accentuated the documentary genre's loss of public prestige.

In truth, the early golden age of the Swedish TV documentary had come to an end.

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Chapter 12

Questioning Entertainment Value

Moments of disruption in the history of Swedish television entertainment

Göran Bolin

Introduction

In the early 1920s John Reith, the first General Director of the BBC, summarised the goals that the organisation still adheres to today: ‘To enrich people’s lives with programmes and services that inform, educate and entertain’.¹ This tripartite credo has since been the leading light for all public service broadcasters, but also for those commercial broadcasters that have aspired for political and cultural legitimacy. When the European public service broadcasters met with commercial competition on a large scale in the 1980s, some of this competition took the form of ‘hybrid companies’ such as Swedish TV4, Danish TV2 and Norwegian TV2 (Syvertsen 1996). These companies were ‘hybrid’ inasmuch as they were commercially financed, but obliged through license agreements with the state to uphold a certain ‘public service ethos’: to reach all parts of the population, to have balanced news reporting and to provide high quality entertainment.

However, already then, and increasingly over the years, both Swedish public service Television (SVT) and its commercial competitors have been accused of privileging entertainment over information and education. It is often argued that the dominant trend in television in the past few decades has been towards more and more entertainment (e.g. Furhammar 2006: 19), and, implicitly, towards a more commercial output in Sweden (Jönsson & Strömbäck 2007) as well as the rest of Europe (e.g. McNair 2000) and the US (McManus 1994). In Sweden this has also been the main conclusion drawn in, for example, the yearly reports on the balance between information and entertainment in television content, empirically based on content analysis of the television output in its totality (Asp 2012). At least this is true if one observes the totality of the television output. The public service channels, however, have always had a relatively balanced mix between information, education and entertainment. But all in all the increased volume of programmes has created a distinct entertainment dominance.

Taking as the point of departure of this study the credo for public service television production to inform, educate and entertain as formulated by the BBC, but then implemented in other national settings, it can be argued that information, education and entertainment correspond to three value spheres, in this case formed around the value of (societal) information, the value of educated knowledge and the value of entertainment. Now, it is obvious that the first of these values – information – has received much more scholarly attention by media researchers than the other two, where the quality of information has been related to the abilities of media users-citizens to act in a politically informed way.² Much less attention has been devoted to the other two areas despite the fact that entertainment has always been highly valued by the audiences, who have devoted much time to this broad category from the very earliest days of television (Gahlin 1985). This chapter will try to make a small contribution to remedy this relative neglect by focusing on some formative moments in the entertainment history of Swedish television.

These formative moments, I will argue, are those where the value of entertainment has come under debate. Such debates are also the sites where value is produced through social interaction and negotiation (cf. Bolin 2011). We arrive at value through evaluation. In cultural production, this means that value appears in its most visible form when it is contested, when there is controversy and when cultural, moral, aesthetic or political norms are challenged. Many of these debates are formed around questions of quality. Accusations of ‘commercialisation’, for example, often imply a negative correlation between high quality and commercial value. Although most would agree that it is extremely difficult to define exactly ‘high quality’ in television production, there are nonetheless doxic beliefs among those involved in both public service and commercial television production as to which programmes represent high quality, and which do not. These evaluations are often ramified by concepts such as ‘originality’, ‘moral integrity’, ‘social or political interest’, ‘formal complexity’, ‘inventiveness’, ‘experiential depth’, etc. (Furhammar 1997: 19ff).

I will call these instances of debate ‘moments of disruption’. They are ‘disruptive’ in the sense that they touch upon and make an intervention into some basic moral, ethical or aesthetic aspect of cultural life, and thus provoke debate and ultimately change our ways of relating to television as a cultural form. They are very seldom revolutionary moments, but rather smaller destabilising disturbances that sharpen our sensitivity for the specific value debated over in the continuous flow of television output (cf. Williams 1974/1979).

The aim of the chapter is thus to analyse a number of moments of disruption where the value of entertainment has come into question. By doing so I intend to contribute to an understanding of how television entertainment is formed, and the dynamics of the constitution of entertainment value. The examples I will rely on might seem regional as they are Swedish, but I argue

that the analysis can also shed light on other national television histories. In fact, Swedish television history has been shaped by trends similar to the rest of Western Europe, as the broadcasting systems have undergone comparable changes, first marked by dominating public service institutions and then successively growing to become dual systems with strong public service as well as strong commercial broadcasters. By focusing on these moments of disruption I also intend to bring some insights into some of the dominant entertainment subgenres. As space does not permit a more exhaustive overview, this is also a way of introducing a wider understanding of subgenres for an international readership.

Value and television

As Swedish radio and television was institutionalised within a public service system, just as in many other European countries, the foundational values of education, information and entertainment were explicitly formed in opposition to commercial value. Success was not to be measured in terms of economic return on investment, but according to the degree to which the output contributed to cognitive stimulation, recreational amusements and informational enlightenment of the citizenry. It was thus formed in opposition to economic value, and thus this specific cultural value was formed in an 'economic world reversed', to paraphrase Pierre Bourdieu (1993: 29).

Furthermore, in both public service and commercial television entertainment production, as a special section of a wider field of cultural production (Bourdieu 1993), value is produced as a result of struggles over what is good entertainment (and good television more generally), and appear in debates on traditional aesthetic and narrative components, production values, thematic seriousness, originality, etc. This value is produced as a negotiation between those involved in the actual production, distribution and administration at the broadcasting companies (and today also in freestanding production units), as well as cultural critics in newspapers and journals, those that train television producers within the academy, and in other educational programmes, other cultural experts, and the general audience members, who could at least make their voices heard through telephone calls and letters to the broadcaster. One of the formal instances of evaluation is Radionämnden, the self-regulating body that see to that the broadcaster does not violate the regulations stipulated in the agreement with the state, and where questions of what is 'good entertainment' frequently has been debated (e.g. Swahn 1982: 57ff). In short, values are produced by the interested parties, those who claim to have a say in questions about what is – and what is not – good entertainment (cf. Bolin 2002a: 187ff).

Television production is a form of media production that is relatively complex: it involves high investments in studio space and equipment and other means of production, complex organisational efforts, and a high degree of work division. All of this means that many people with different skills and backgrounds will be involved. These people bring with them specific ideas of what television production is about, and what it should aim at. In such highly collective cultural production, intense debates and struggles over the field's common value often arise, as a result of someone, or some production, radically introducing something that threatens the fundamentals of this value (e.g. what is good entertainment). When on Boxing Day 1966 the famous actor Per Oscarsson gradually undressed, removing an item of clothing one by one, while giving the audience sex education (the way in which parents introduce children to the mysteries of sexual behaviour) on the immensely popular Saturday evening family show *Hylands börna* (1962-1983), this produced reactions from ordinary viewers, and resulted in an all-time low appreciation for this specific episode of the series (Gahlin 1985: 16f). Oscarsson had with this move transgressed the line of what was then considered proper behaviour on live television entertainment. Furthermore, when six distinguished gentlemen in a series of four programmes in the late Autumn of 1963 sat around a table discussing how to make a TV programme while smoking and using foul language (quite mild by today's standards, though), this, it is also believed, produced a 'storm' of protests from viewers (Sjögren 1997: 215ff). Also, following Sweden's – and ABBA's – victory in the *Eurovision Song Contest* in 1974, when Sweden was to arrange the competition in Stockholm, there were fights within the public service broadcaster, and a wider cultural debate that eventually resulted in Swedish withdrawal from the competition in 1976. And when *Bingolotto*, broadcast by commercial station TV4, challenged public service broadcaster SVT in the early 1990s, this produced debates on entertainment quality, as well as on increased commercialism and consumerism, and the value of public service. Likewise, when SVT produced and broadcast *Expedition: Robinson* in 1997 (the format developed by British company Castaway and later to make international success as *Survivor*), this led to massive criticism of the public service company for having sold out to commercial forces, seeking cheap entertainment, etc. (Furhammar 2006: 141). Public service broadcaster SVT faced similar criticism when it chose to broadcast the internationally successful soap *Dallas* in 1981 (-1993) (incidentally reappearing with new episodes in 2012, but now on commercial TV4) (Nordmark 1999: 313). The criticism was repeated also when SVT later developed its own soap formats.

The question of what entertainment really is, then, results from these struggles over the value of entertainment. These struggles, formed around the evaluations of interested agents, are naturally argued in relation to genre characteristics. Quite early in the history of Swedish television three such genres or general

types of programmes were identified in a report from the department of audience analysis of SR (Gahlin 1985): quiz shows and gaming programmes, music entertainment – by which foremost was meant the *Eurovision Song Contest* – and Saturday evening entertainment shows. Incidentally, these genres also correspond to three of the examples mentioned above. There is, however, also a fourth type; what I would like to call ‘the meta-television show’. These shows were slightly less popular among the audience, and sometimes even met with criticism, but they are often highlighted in the broadcasters’ own accounts, and among critics and researchers. A Swedish example is the already mentioned six gentlemen known as ‘Skäggen’ (The Beards). This is the kind of entertainment that experiments with the medium, makes meta-commentaries on the narrative and generic character of the medium itself. An international example of this is *Monty Python’s Flying Circus* (1969–1974), which ironically thematised the conventions of television (see Crisell 1997/2002: 125). Many of these conventions stem from news, and news parody can be said to be the dominating form of meta-television. The BBC is generally held to be an early pioneer of this kind of programme, but there are plenty of international examples in television history, from *That Was the Week That Was* and *Spitting Image* (both UK) to *Saturday Night Live* and *The Colbert Report* (USA), *De uaktuele nyheder* (Denmark) and *Striscia la notizia* (Italy) (Baym & Jones 2012).

The next sections will be devoted to discussing further the examples given above of controversies or disruptive moments when the value of entertainment has been challenged. The examples have been chosen partly on the grounds of the specific moral or aesthetic boundaries that have been pushed due to the controversies they have provoked, but also because some of them form a part of the self-understanding of the public service broadcaster SVT, sometimes with the aid of media research.

Early television: A new platform of cultural production

As is the case with new media technologies, television has also incorporated aesthetic, generic and narrative influences from previous media technologies, for example, radio and film, but also presentational forms such as theatre, poetry, literature and music. It has also, importantly, employed production staff that have worked with previous media technologies and their organisational forms (administratively and aesthetically), and brought with them the practices developed there into the new setting. As with all new technologies, these organisational forms were also adjusted to the affordances of the new technology and its institutionalised forms. When it comes to television entertainment, many of the early programme forms originated in radio. One of the most successful television entertainment shows, *Hylands hörna* (Hyland’s Corner),

was first launched on radio in the Autumn of 1961, and transferred to television the year after (*Hört och sett*, 1974: 199). There are obvious traces of the narrative forms of radio in the first television episode; the host Lennart Hyland (1919-1993) walks among the studio audience asking them random questions, while simultaneously telling the viewing audience what he was doing. To the television viewer this show-and-tell strategy resulted in much redundant information, which, nevertheless, would on many occasions have been necessary information for a radio listener, had Hyland not explained what he was doing.

These programmes look more peculiar in the context of today's media landscape than they probably did to the contemporary viewer. It is also obvious that Hyland is actually instructing or educating the audience in the studio – and thus the audience at home – in how to watch a television entertainment programme. His tone is often didactic, and he often calls on the studio audience to behave in this or that way (as he would later have the viewers take part in mass-orchestrated behaviour, such as turning on and off apartment lights in cities all over Sweden).

A foundational characteristic of the live production *Hylands börna* was the emphasis laid on spontaneity in order to produce an air of authenticity. Hyland never used scripts (Hyland & Nilsson 1994: 37), but rather improvised. The producer also staged moments of surprise in order to achieve the authentic and spontaneous character of the programme (Schulman 1974: 111). Liveness is naturally a foundational quality in television broadcasting (Heath & Skirrow 1977), but it can take many forms and has to be actively constructed in the production (Bourdon 2000). This is very evident in the first episode of *Hylands börna*, when Hyland in his introductory speech after the musical intro explains to the viewers that 'everything can happen'. And, as we shall see, it does.

In the early days of television, when the producers and scriptwriters of the new medium were struggling with forms and contents, it is from the vantage point of today surprising how soon the popular conventions of narration and genres were established. Most of the widely popular entertainment genres of today were in fact developed in the very first year of broadcast television: the entertainment show, the quiz and gaming show and the musical competition (most notably the *Eurovision Song Contest*) (Gahlin 1985). When the first experimental broadcasts were made locally in the Stockholm area in October 1954, the opening night had three programmes: a news broadcast, the weather report and the high mark of the evening, an entertainment show called *En skål för televisionen* (A Toast for Television), incidentally hosted by Lennart Hyland (*Hört och sett* 1974: 181). The programme was constructed as an anniversary broadcast, celebrating the past 25 years of television as a medium. It was posing as if aired in 1979, and contained flashbacks of the television history up until then – a form that can be said to have set the tone for one of the dramatic forms of television: the segment (cf. Ellis 1982/1992). With this,

the entertainment show as a specific television genre with its mix of hosts, artists, performances, etc., was established.

In general, the television viewers were quite content with the televised entertainment, and most entertainment programmes were highly popular, regarded positively in the audience polls, which by then were still quite irregularly conducted.³ However, there were among the many successful and non-controversial programmes also a few occasions of disruption and debate. For example, not all viewers endorsed the visual experimentation in the entertainment shows produced by Åke Falck (1925-1974) (Gahlin 1985: 18), although he with the production *Kaskad* (1962), starring Eartha Kitt, received the Rose d'Or/The Golden Rose at the Montreux global entertainment television festival in the same year.⁴ However, two occasions, representing two different kinds of disruption, during the early years of Swedish television stand out as less appreciated, at least by audiences: first, the four programmes of meta-television commentary staged by six men known as 'Skäggen', and second, the episode of *Hylands hörna* in December 1966 when actor Per Oscarsson undressed in front of the cameras.

Introducing meta-commentary: 'Skäggen'

The first of these moments occurred when the four programmes *Fasad*, *Segment*, *Modul* and *Relief* were broadcast over four weeks, starting in November 1963. The first – *Fasad* – opens with a panoramic view of Radio House (Radiohuset), the physical manifestation of public service radio in Stockholm, to the accompaniment of Victor Young's dramatic score for the western film *Run with the Arrow* (1957). The camera zooms in and we enter through the window into a spacious meeting room, maybe a boardroom, where six bearded gentlemen discuss ideas for an entertainment show. This is clearly one of the first meta-television programmes in Swedish television. The main focus in the programmes is that the six bearded men each suggests and dismisses different programme ideas (to the sound of a flushing toilet). The tone is mildly ironic and absurd, provoking slight confusion. Already the title – *Fasad* – and the panoramic movement alongside the long façade of the headquarters of the Swedish Radio (the Swedish broadcasting corporation) indicated a slight irony directed towards the pompous and pretentious audience address in culture programming on television, especially in combination with the overly dramatic musical score. The host, or chairman, Åke Söderqvist (1933-1987) welcomes the audience with a generically proper address: 'Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to the first programme in our new Sunday series *Fasad*'. This presentation, preceded by the dramatic music of Young, further establishes the unstable address that would characterise the series in its entirety. Söderqvist, by this time head of the television entertainment section of Swedish Radio, continues:

'The role of radio and television is not only to amuse and entertain, but also to educate and inform, and we shall begin with such an informative item, a folklore documentary, that will be presented by one of the country's foremost experts in the area. I bid "Welcome" to Associate Professor Jan-Öivind Swahn from Lund [University].'

Then follows what is obviously a mock documentary of the more absurd kind.

Now, the absurd tone of the programme is reinforced not only by Söderqvist actually being head of entertainment section at SR, but also by Jan-Öivind Swahn (1925-) actually being an Associate Professor of Folklore at Lund University, and the author of several academic works, as well as producer of educational programmes on TV. This academic connection is, however, not at all uncommon for satire and comedy, and can also be found among the members of *Monty Python's Flying Circus* in the UK, as well as among other producers of comedy and satire in Sweden. The Swedish equivalent to Oxford and Cambridge, where the Pythons had their roots, was Uppsala and Lund, the two oldest universities in Sweden. From these seats of learning came not only people who eventually produced entertainment, they were also the providers of most of the staff in early Swedish radio and television (Engblom 1998), just as it was for other public service institutions internationally – most notably the BBC (cf. Burns 1977). Not all of 'the Beards' were academics, however; others were poets, artists, playwrights and authors from different strands of cultural production outside of television.

Although most viewers at the time were generally positive towards television programmes of all genres, and especially entertainment television, *Fasad* as the first programme in the series supposedly created a storm of protests among viewers. This, at least, is how it was described in the accounts given by the institution itself (*Hört och sett*, 1974: 244; cf. Schulman & Schulman 1980: 87ff). Evidently, there were 103 telephone calls registered on the eve of broadcast, complaining about the tastelessness of the programme (something that was also commented on in the third episode, when the board meeting was interrupted by an angry mob of viewers). The coming three weeks *Fasad* was followed by *Segment*, *Modul* and *Relief*, none of which seem to have changed the attitudes among audience members. The third episode – *Modul* – was watched by 62 percent of those with access to a television set, but only appreciated by 36 percent of these (Gahlin 1985: 17). However, the four programmes have become considered a milestone in Swedish television, not least in the self-understanding of the broadcasting institution. As already mentioned, their popular appeal was not on par with other entertainment shows at the time, but they are nonetheless viewed as significant occasions in Swedish television history in jubilee publications (e.g. *Hört och sett*, 1975: 244f), on the web pages of the broadcaster and journalistic and essayistic accounts (Gradvall 1996; Schulman & Schulman 1980),

as well as in academic historical accounts of Swedish television (Nordmark 1999: 237f; Sjögren 1997: 215ff).⁵ It is clear, then, that the reactions from (some) viewers, and the evaluation by culture critics and broadcast management do not coincide (the programmes were actually appreciated by the top administration at the broadcaster; cf. *Hört och sett*, 1975: 245).

*The mixing of (sexual) education with entertainment:
Hylands börna*

The second moment of disruption during the formative years of Swedish television occurred on Boxing Day 1966. *Hylands börna* was a hugely popular series that started on radio in 1960, and then the next year was brought to television. It was hosted by all-round journalist and entertainment host Lennart Hyland, who had a long-standing reputation as radio host for similar highly popular entertainment programmes, most notably *Karusellen* (Carousel, 1951-1954). The inspiration for *Hylands börna* came from US talk show *The Tonight Show*, and especially its host Jack Paar (1918-2004), whom Hyland admired greatly after SR had sent him on a study trip to the US in 1958 (Hyland & Nilsson 1994: 111). Today, he would probably have been accused of 'stealing' the format, but in those days formats were not yet commodities that could be exchanged for economic value (cf. Humphreys 2011 on legal frameworks for formats).

A recurrent moment in the programme was an invited guest that would appear in disguise, in order for Hyland to guess his or her identity. On Boxing Day 1966 it was the actor Per Oscarsson (1927-2010) who, entering the stage disguised as Don Quixote, continued to undress after his identity had been revealed by Hyland.⁶ While undressing, Oscarsson gave a speech in the form of sexual education, explaining the act of sexual intercourse and 'how babies are made', as if addressing a very young child. It is very obvious already from the broadcast images that Hyland did not appreciate this surprise.

Not all among the viewers appreciated it either. There are several accounts of the many telephone calls from upset viewers made to the switchboard of the broadcaster that evening (e.g. *Hört och sett*, 1974: 262; Sjögren 1989: 244; Schulman 1974: 111). The programme had attracted a large audience: 78 percent of the Swedish population had seen it, no doubt because of the lack of competing activities on Boxing Day. The switchboard operators summarised the evening as one of the worst ever in terms of complaints. The telephone calls continued the day after the programme, with ca. 400 people calling the switchboard, most of them to complain (Höijer 1998: 212). Still, against this background, it is peculiar that most people (62%) actually valued the programme positively, as opposed to *Modul*, the third episode in the series by 'The beards', which was watched by 62 percent of those with television receivers, but only valued positively by 36 percent of these (Gahlin 1985: 16f).

The reactions to these two shows were topically focussed. It was a critique based on moral behaviour and conduct, sexual properness, especially on a family show (*Hylands börna*), foul language, disrespectfulness and the pushing of moral boundaries (Skäggen). This can be compared with the visual inventiveness of producer Åke Falck, whose productions were far too experimental for the general audience. As Gahlin (1985: 18) points out, Falck's programmes were far less popular among viewers than Skäggen. However, in the self-understanding of the broadcasting corporations this is not emphasised, while the 'storm' against Skäggen is. The measure of success for the broadcasting corporation is then controversy rather than degrees of popularity among the general audience.

Therefore, the new medium brought with it certain experiment with form, some of which was considered controversial, and the issue of debate among critics and the general viewing audience. In the self-understanding of the institution, it is rather these moments that are emphasised, than those with large audience appeal (although this is of course mentioned too). But we can also see that television as a new medium attracted the interest of cultural producers from other parts of the wider field of cultural production. It was thus a meeting ground where authors, poets, playwrights, academics, actors and journalists experimented with genre and form. Similar dynamics in the national fields of cultural production can be observed in other countries, such as at the BBC in the UK, where academics such as the Pythons, or playwrights such as Dennis Potter (1935-1994), engaged in the medium (cf. Ericson 2004).

Defending the economic world reversed: Eurovision Song Contest in the 1970s

Another long-standing and widely popular genre has been music entertainment. The most popular of all such entertainment shows was the ESC, and its national prelude, the Melody Festival, in which show contestants have competed to be chosen as the representative in the European final. ESC is naturally not a Swedish invention. Launched by the EBU in 1956 it is rather one of the earliest and most successful transnational formats that the pan-European organisation has produced. Even if Sweden was not part of the original 1956 event, the country soon entered the competition and has since with a few exceptions taken part every year. The first broadcast in Sweden of the competition was in 1958 (although the first Swedish song to compete was in 1959). It has since been very popular among audiences (Gahlin 1985: 23), although there have also been raised significant voices of criticism against it, albeit on different grounds over the period (Björnberg 1987: 196ff). In fact, during the 1980s, the show was among the most popular, gathering between 62 and 74 percent of the viewers (Gahlin 1985: 43).

For many years Sweden was, however, not very successful in the competition. But at the ESC in Brighton in 1974, this changed. ABBA, who had tried their luck the previous two years in the national competition, were now representatives of Sweden, and with the catchy tune 'Waterloo', and the spectacular outfits reflecting the latest glam fashion, they managed to win the contest. This meant that Sweden, as the winning country, would host the competition the following year, which also happened, although not without controversy.

There had for some years been a strong criticism of the phenomenon of the ESC, especially from the Swedish music industry (cf. Fornäs 1979). In the eyes of the alternative music movement the ESC was a commercial stunt, which they were protesting against through arranging an alternative music festival. There were protests against the event in culture debates (Björnberg 1987: 197), as well as internally on Swedish Radio (Björnberg 1998: 244ff). And although this can be considered as the high point of criticism against commercialism, this specific kind of criticism against the contest for being inauthentic and commercial had been present since the beginning (Björnberg 1987: 196ff). The alternative music movement also arranged an alternative song festival, documented in *Musikfilmen / Vi har vår egen sång* (1976).⁷ Within SR there were substantial discussions around the event, and especially the youth division of SR was openly opposed to the ESC arrangement and coverage, and argued for a balance in their broadcasts, and the need to cover the alternative event to the same extent (Björnberg 1998: 245).

The criticism directed against the ESC and the national Melody Festival for being commercial, in the words of Alf Björnberg, merely 'serves as expression of an aesthetic judgement' (Björnberg 2007: 16). As Björnberg points out, only ABBA have enjoyed international success due to winning the ESC. Commercially, then, the *national* Melody Festival is more important for the artists performing, while the *international* ESC functions more like a ritualised media event that is mainly important for broadcasters (Bolin 2010). As has become increasingly obvious with the entry of countries from the former Soviet bloc, the competitions are 'a display of public-service professionalism' (Björnberg 2007: 16), where each national broadcaster has to prove its ability by outmatching the previous year's organisers: it becomes an internal competition in professional production performance among the member organisations of the EBU. The turning point here is 2002, when Estonia as the first post-Soviet country arranged the final (Ericson 2002).

While it is obvious that from the perspective of the broadcasters, the competition is really focussed on the professionalism of the production (whether the organising nation's broadcaster was capable of carrying out the task), the public debates in the tabloid press (and increasingly in the broadsheets), as well as internally within SR (and later SVT),⁸ have always been centred on questions of the quality of entertainment, both in terms of musical quality,

and performance of artists as well as hosts for the show. However, both kinds of evaluation of performance contribute to the constitution of entertainment value.

These debates can be interpreted as an intensified sensitivity of the threats to public service, non-commercial broadcasting, from commercial competitors. We should remember that the competition to public service radio arrived in the 1970s (with early signs already in the 1960s with pirate music radio, cf. Forsman 2010: 37f). It can be argued that the heightened awareness of the increasing competition emerged in the debate around ESC 1975, to the extent that SR decided not to compete in ESC 1976. The critique should also be understood in light of other defences of cultural and aesthetic values against the perceived threats of commercialisation, for example, in the music business, where the voices from the alternative, non-profit oriented music movement were especially influential, and with connection to people in radio production.

The critical stance towards ESC has clearly changed in recent years, and over the past decade SVT has invested heavily in the national competition The Melody Festival, which has extended to include a series of competitions with the aim of selecting the song that presumably will stand the best chance of being successful internationally – just as in many other European countries. In that sense the ESC has become transformed from a symbolic threat to public service, to a symbol of this specific kind of broadcasting ethos, and a marker of the strength of public service broadcasters as performers in the international arena of television production.

The era of competition:

Arguing public service value through entertainment

If *En skål för televisionen* pointed out a form for Saturday evening family entertainment on television, *Hylands hörna* indeed established the genre. The show was broadcast until 1983, although not continuously. However, variations of the Saturday evening entertainment formula have come and gone over the years. Admittedly, few have been as successful as the original, although many of them have also gathered large audiences. Few other programme genres could compete with entertainment on Saturday nights, besides major sports events such as the world championships in ice-hockey which have also been popular (especially when Sweden do well).

When the Swedish public service broadcaster SVT met with competition in the late 1980s, the competition was primarily not for the news audience but the entertainment one. Thus, when TV4 was granted the licence agreement to broadcast exclusively as the third terrestrial channel in 1991, they were fortunate to pick up a lottery game show from local television in Gothenburg

that was closely connected to Swedish sports both in terms of distribution of lottery tickets and television production staff. The programme *Bingolotto* grew quite quickly to become a huge success in terms of audience figures (and lottery tickets sold), and is one of the longest running series to date in Swedish television. The live broadcast programme itself was centred around three bingo games – the viewers played bingo on lottery tickets sold and distributed by the various social movements in Sweden (mostly sports associations). It included musical performances, initially by dance band orchestras,⁹ but also eventually international stars such as Ricky Martin, David Bowie and others.

Bingolotto was broadcast on commercial TV4, and became one of their biggest successes, the very basis of the television broadcaster's rise in popularity. It still runs at the time of writing, but has moved back and forth between the many different niche channels that TV4 today has as its platforms for reaching various audience segments. A series of events contributed to its success. Firstly, TV4 was bound by a licence agreement with the state, holding among other conditions that a certain amount of their programming was to be produced outside of Stockholm, the capital of Sweden, and the city in which most media production is concentrated. *Bingolotto* had been produced by a local production unit and broadcast on local television in Gothenburg since 1989, before it was brought to national television in 1991. The local production team continued to produce the show in the same way for national television. This meant that it was heavily marked by the context of local television, with a very close and personal audience address. The programme was produced by a local free-standing production company for Folkspel (an umbrella organisation for administrating the gaming activities of the organised Swedish social movements), and the broadcaster TV4 basically provided the time-slot on prime time Saturday evenings. *Bingolotto*'s host was initially and up until 1999 local sports personality and long time host for a local radio talk show (phone-in programme), Leif 'Loket' Olsson. A second feature that firmly 'localised' the programme was the fact that it built on the selling of the lottery tickets to viewers of the Saturday evening show by local sports associations. This meant that in small towns and villages it was identifiable young people from the local sports associations who sold the tickets (often by knocking on doors), and accordingly also benefitted from the game. One third of the revenues from the tickets sold went directly back to the associations, and for many years this meant annual revenues for these associations of one billion SEK (roughly 100 million EUR) (Bolin & Forsman 2002).

Due to these two features, *Bingolotto* was far more popular among audiences outside of the big city areas in Sweden (Reimer 1998: 280). Its audience also grew gradually older over the years, and as TV4 had a target group of 15-44 years, there were constant tensions between the production unit in Gothenburg and the broadcasting corporation TV4 in Stockholm. The popular-

ity among rural and small town audiences, as well as the emphasis on lowly regarded popular music (at least among cultural elites), made the programme a perfect tool for practices of distinction, and it met with substantial criticism among cultural elites, who often dismissed it as bad entertainment, populist and unsophisticated. It was among the most pure signifiers of bad taste, perhaps most notably used in the feature film *Show me Love* (orig. *Fucking Åmål*, 1998), or kitsch, as in Madonna's video 'Ray of Light' (1998), produced by Swedish video-maker Jonas Åkerlund (Bolin & Forsman 2002: 77f).

A similarity between *Bingolotto* and *Hylands hörna* was that both endorsed amateurs, and 'ordinary people' as guests (cf. Schulman 1974: 60). There were many artists who started their careers in *Hylands hörna*, while in *Bingolotto* it was not the artists who were amateurs, but the invited guests of Locket Olsson sitting around his table in the studio playing the lottery game. Other similarities were the emphasis on liveness, and the producers of both shows had developed sophisticated technologies for the production of liveness. Most often these involved pranks and other tricks used by the producers in order to provoke spontaneous emotional reactions by the host, such as having secret guests arriving to the studio, changing the stage setup without telling the host, etc. (cf. Bolin 2009: 44; Schulman 1974: 110f). It was thus no coincidence that Olsson on three occasions received the Lennart Hyland Prize for Best Male Show Host of the Year.

In many ways there is a striking homology in the criticism of ESC and *Bingolotto*. Both are criticised for being inferior, unsophisticated and mindless entertainment. However, there are also differences that point to societal changes in mentality and ideology. The ESC and the Melody Festival were most often accused of being commercial and going for the lowest common denominator. This is not really the case with *Bingolotto*, although it is obvious that the whole programme has always been constructed around the display of commercial goods in the form of prizes (Volvo cars, Harley Davidson MCs, jewellery and other consumer goods). It is also indicative that at the ESC final in 2002, the first year the final was arranged by a post-Soviet country (Estonia), the winning contribution was accused of not being commercial enough (Bolin 2002b: 33). So criticism of commercialisation has waned in favour of other themes. The criticism of *Bingolotto* was more centred on the axis town-country, where it was obvious that the show with its popular (as in folksy) audience address appealed more to a rural and small-town audience. The criticism was thus clearly based on differences in lifestyle and taste cultures (i.e. in opposition to the supposed snobbish Stockholm culture), which were revealed in the open criticism shown by some established intellectuals and people with high amounts of cultural capital (Bolin & Forsman 2002: 77f).

The empire strikes back: Expedition Robinson

When public service broadcaster SVT met with serious competition from TV4 in the early 1990s, discussions within the company started to revolve around what could be considered a realistic goal for audience reach. Up to that point, SVT could rely on a large audience almost irrespective of the quality of programmes. At least this was the case for prime time. As we have seen above, even programmes that were not even positively ranked in audience polls could still gather around 60 percent of the population, something that naturally changed with the increased access to a wide range of channels, and the increased choices presented to viewers. As its dominant position ended, SVT sought ways in which to keep a reasonable part of the viewers, as the will to pay licence fees would presumably diminish were the ratings to sink below a certain level. Audience ratings started to become more important and around 1997, SVT started to publish audience ratings for all programmes through the internal communications system for all employees. Previously, only the executives had access to these constant updates, and audience figures circulated sparsely (Lindén 2011: 221).

Since the start of TV4 as the third national terrestrial channel in 1991, the commercial channel gradually came to outperform SVT for the Friday and Saturday evening audiences. As described above, TV4 had *Bingolotto*, which quickly became hugely popular and came to dominate Saturday evenings. From the Autumn of 1992 until Spring 1997, *Bingolotto* had ca. two million viewers on average, a quite substantial audience in a country of around nine million inhabitants. On Fridays, the French format *Fort Boyard* had been adopted by TV4 as *Fångarna på fortet*. Also, this programme gathered audiences of around 2 million viewers each week, and in 2006 over 2,5 million each week.

To try to compete with commercial TV4, SVT consulted the production company Strix. This free-standing production company had a few years previously bought the production rights to a format called 'Survivor' from the British company Castaway, a format that they now activated for SVT. In the Swedish production it was renamed *Expedition: Robinson* (Perrotta 2010). The internal criticism within SVT was substantial, and focussed on four aspects. Firstly, Strix was owned by Modern Times Group (MTG), which also controlled commercial channel TV3. Secondly, it was generally considered that the only reason for producing the show was to maximise audience ratings. Thirdly, it would consume much of the budget for entertainment. Fourthly, some of the middle management was sidestepped in the decision process. The final decision to produce the show was taken by the CEO (Lindén 2011: 222f).

In addition to the internal criticism, there was an external criticism of the project in the press. This criticism began already when SVT presented the idea for the press. One of the main tabloids Aftonbladet called the programme

'fascist', an evaluation shared by other commentators in the press (cf. Andersson 2006). This negative response was fuelled further during post-production before the premiere, as one of the earliest out-voted contestants committed suicide, and after the premiere there was massive criticism against it in the press (Lindén 2011: 225). SVT rescheduled and temporarily halted in order to re-edit the series (especially the voting procedures), and after three weeks the second episode in the series was broadcast, provoking the same criticism. The head of entertainment programming, who was the main proponent for the production, resigned shortly afterwards, but when the last episode of the season was broadcast the criticism turned completely around: the programme was highly popular among the audience (2,35 million viewers), and the press reactions were positive (Lindén 2011: 233) – maybe because the tabloids realised that reality shows provided with endless opportunities to ride along on the wave of popularity of the shows. *Bingolotto*, which aired at 19.00 in the evening, faced a significant decline in audience ratings when *Expedition: Robinson* started at 20.00: from 1,46 to 1,24 million viewers.¹⁰

The criticism against *Expedition Robinson* was, as we have seen, based on its commercial character, its appeal to the lowest human sentiments and drives, that it was humiliating for both participants and viewers, individualistic, crass strive for audience maximisation, and, from within the SVT itself, that it was not public service. In the heated internal debates that followed at SVT, CEO Sam Nilsson was posed the question if he thought that *Expedition: Robinson* indeed 'was public service'. He defended his previous decision to air the show and answered that it was (Lindén 2011: 231).

At this specific point in time, the value of 'public service' was highly debated. TV4's new slogan for the company was 'commercial public service', and Programme Director Jan Scherman exemplified the public service value of the channel with *Bingolotto*:

'The programme exemplifies many of the values that I find important for TV4 to represent in its capacity of being a commercial television broadcaster. For me it is extremely important to mark a pronounced distance from TV3, TV5 and their form of unrestrained and cynical commercialism. On the other hand, we don't want to be associated with the programming profile of SVT either. It is somewhere in between these positions that we want to place ourselves, and thus *Bingolotto* fits just into that publicist profile of ours. [...] Previously, I used to speak about "commercially financed public service" in relation to our profile, but we have lately begun to speak about a "quality commercial channel", but one that has a genuinely popular anchorage, and that's where *Bingolotto* fits in. I find that the definition of public service that you find in official reports from the state applies well with the programme. The programme is beneficial to society at many levels, both as broadcast

programme and in the wider society. And it is a kind of entertainment that I find... sympathetic is a word I often use when describing *Bingolotto*. It doesn't expose people in unpleasant ways, doesn't devote itself to "mobbing journalism", but is... well, sympathetic'.

(Jan Scherman, interviewed by author 1 February 2000)

It is quite clear from the quote that Scherman is well aware of the debates surrounding *Bingolotto*. At the same time he is arguing that his own channel produces public service value. However, his counterpart in SVT, Mikael Olsson, argues the same thing for *Expedition: Robinson* (Metro, 3 April 2000; cf. Bolin 2004: 283). Both programme directors implicitly take issue with the criticism raised against the two programmes, counter-posing journalistic critical discourse with public service values in a struggle over the value of entertainment. We can then see that the value of public service, as reflecting and representing high quality in television programming, becomes extended to include entertainment values to a much higher degree than it did when SVT had no commercial competitors.

Conclusion: Success as measured by controversy

The examples given above illustrate, on the one hand, moments of disruption in the Swedish entertainment television history. However, from a meta-perspective, they are also milestones that are accounted for in the history of Swedish entertainment television, as related to us by researchers (e.g. Nordmark 1999; Sjögren 1997), but also in the self-accounting of Swedish Television, which, in its 'open archive' has provided clips and even full programmes of these moments, as well as compilations (e.g. SVTs account of the Swedish 1960s¹¹).

Naturally, these are far from all the occasions when there has been struggle over the value of entertainment and its place within the wider framework of public service value; what it is and is not, when it is good and when it is bad. There are of course other moments that could have been mentioned, but it would probably not make much difference for the overall understanding of the struggles within the sphere of entertainment television production. In less intense ways one could argue that this struggle also continues on an everyday basis, among interested parties ranging from people working at different levels of administration and production within the broadcasting corporations, people employed in free-standing production units serving these corporations (and thus dependent on them), cultural debaters in the mass media as well as academic critics (not least media and communication studies scholars), sponsors, advertisers and last, but not least, the viewers who with different sorts of feedback give voice to this value.

With the examples given I hope to have shown how the field of television production has become established with the advent of commercial competition, as the arguments for the values of public service and quality production have become more explicit, and in itself a focal point of debate. Each field of production is formed as an opposition between the specific value of the field itself, and the values imposed on the field from outer demand. These values can be political, economic and/or educational/informative. If television entertainment in the early days was a new platform for agents from other parts of the sphere of cultural production, we can see that towards the end of the period, and especially with growing competition, it becomes a (sub)field in its own right. In the course of this field formation it is not success as measured through the values of outer demand that is of importance (the informative, political, or economic), but rather the moments highlighted by the field itself – and shown through its self-understanding – that point to moments of controversy. This is especially so for the public service broadcaster, and we can see that when controversy is over, most of the shows that initially provoked the moments of disruption are taken over by the commercial channels, and produced on the sole ground of answering to the outer demands from the economic field of power (the stockholders of commercial companies). Thus, when *Dallas* reappeared in 2012 it was not on public service SVT (but on commercial TV4). *Expedition: Robinson*, after having become a success, was moved from SVT to commercial TV3. When the measure of success is controversy, there are few incentives for SVT to continue production when controversy has become naturalised in the general television repertoire. In that sense, the public service broadcaster is still the driver of innovation in the field of television production.

Notes

1. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/aboutthebbc/statements2007/purpose.shtml>. See also Reith (1924).
2. A search in NCOM, the database for Nordic media and communication research provided by Nordicom (www.nordicom.gu.se), reveals the following balance between items registered: news/nyheter (3,069/594), journalism/journalistik (5,171/1,492), entertainment/underhållning (502/42).
3. Regular audience polls were introduced in 1964, and the division for audience statistics (SR/PUB) was first formed in 1969 (*Hört och sett*, 1974: 311).
4. <http://www.rosedor.ch/en/history/1962/the-festival/>. Also, this exemplifies that success among viewers stands in opposition to success as measured by the field itself.
5. Each episode can be found in its entirety on YouTube: *Fasad*: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lvw61rKTEek> ; *Segment*: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pnCavqSqyv4> ; *Modul*: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zEV1i808JmY> ; *Relief*: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OPZeBXdgVmA> .
6. Oscarsson's appearance is on YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g63xJJC_1VM.
7. See information on the festival at <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0074939/>.
8. Until 1976 the company that organised both radio and television broadcasting was Swedish Radio (SR). In 1976 the company was reorganised into four companies, and Swedish Television (SVT) became one.

9. A Swedish and Norwegian phenomenon described well on <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dansband>.
10. Ratings from Mediemätning i Skandinavien, MMS (www.mms.se).
11. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Lrr0C8oW0A&feature=related>

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Chapter 13

The Greening of the News

The institutionalization of 'the environment' in television news reporting 1961-1973

Monika Djerf-Pierre

Introduction

It is generally recognized that the first wave of attention to environmental problems in the news media took place in the 1960s. Less is known about how environmental coverage was established in television news and how environmental reporting evolved as a specialized beat in the newsrooms. This paper examines the evolution of environmental reporting in television news in Sweden, focusing on how key features of the environmental news-genre were shaped in the early years, from 1961 to 1973. How did the attention to the environment as a news topic, the news discourse on the environment, the journalistic forms of expression in environmental stories and the organization of environmental reporting in the newsroom evolve during these formative years?

The study of specific genres and/or programmes in broadcasting is a key area of historical media research. With regard to journalism, studies have been conducted on the history of television news (e.g. Bastiansen 2002; Cox 1995), current affairs programmes and TV documentaries (e.g. Bondebjerg 2008; Diesen 2005; Goddard, Corner & Richardsson 2007), televised sport etc. This chapter adds to this field of research by closely examining the historical formation of environmental reporting as a specific subgenre of news. There are few previous studies on the subject and most have examined how the press 'discovered' environmental issues in the U.S. or the U.K. (e.g. Brookes, Jordan, Kimber & Richardson 1976; Parlour & Schatzow 1978; Schoenfeld, Meier, & Griffin 1979; Suhonen 1993).

The study examines how a new genre is established in the news and how it evolves over time. The chapter starts with a discussion of the theoretical framework of the study which draws from historical institutionalism, journalism and genre theory. This section is followed by three empirical analyses of specific aspects of environmental news reporting from 1961 to 1973: (1) the attention to environmental issues and the news discourse on the environment, (2) the journalistic forms of expression in environmental news, and (3) the

environmental journalists and the organization of environmental reporting in the newsroom. A concluding section closes the chapter.

Environmental reporting as an institutional practice

The present analysis draws from institutional theory in two different ways. First, the specific genre conventions that pertain to environmental news are perceived of as institutional features, i.e. they are part of a journalistic practice that entails roles, norms and routines. Secondly, institutional theory provides an interpretive framework for examining why genres evolve and change in a certain way. Different historical situations provide different conditions for news production, and norms and practices do change in ways that affect how 'the environment' is treated in the newsroom.

Genres as institutions

The most basic definition of genres is that they are 'types of text', i.e. a group of texts that share specific textual features. When applied to news, these textual features relate to both the journalistic content (topics, themes, subject matters, actors) and the journalistic forms of expression (narrative structure, audio-visual design, mode of representation) (cf. Chandler 1997). The textual features of genres are conventions that evolve over time and these are recognized by audiences and producers alike, thus linking producers (and conditions of production) with audiences (Neale 2000).

The institutional approach to the study of genres is not new; genre analysts such as Todorov and Berrong (1976) have previously argued that genres constitute codified practices that link producers with audiences/readers and that "the recurrence of certain discursive properties is institutionalized, and individual texts are produced and perceived in relation to the norm" (p. 162). Genres exist as institutions in "that they function as 'horizons of expectation' for readers, and as 'models of writing' for authors" (p. 163). According to Todorov and Berrong, genres, like any other institution, reveal the constitutive traits of the society to which they belong. Genres derive from the production conditions from which they emanate. The environmental news genre is thus an historical construct that is produced and reproduced in a specific societal, professional and organizational context.

News production is a professional and organizational practice that involves specific roles, norms and routines that journalists draw from when doing news work (e.g. Tuchman 1978). Television news journalism has an established institutional logic, or *modus operandi*, regarding what are considered the legitimate and appropriate ways of producing news. This logic is persistent

but not unchangeable and it entails discursive and narrative features, but also professional roles and routines for organizing work in the newsroom. Some parts of this *modus operandi* are applicable to the television news genre as a whole, and some relate to specific domains or beats – such as political, international, financial and environmental news.

The institutional framework accordingly allows for an examination of environmental news that discriminates between three dimensions of news as an institutional practice; the professional roles and routines for organizing work in the newsroom, the journalistic forms of expression and the environmental discourse (the ‘content’ of news).

The first dimension relates to how the coverage of the environment has been organized in the newsroom. A key question is if environmental reporting has been organized as a specific beat with specialist reporters. Other aspects include the professional background of environmental reporters and how they have approached the environmental domain in their professional work.

The second dimension concerns the journalistic forms of expression in the environmental news stories. This takes account of the role of the reporters in the environmental stories including how interviews are conducted, the audio-visual design of stories (specifically the use of visuals), and the mode of representation, i.e. the journalistic strategies for depicting reality.

The third dimension involves the specific discourse on the environmental problems that is constructed in the news. Issues can generally be defined as matters of public concern that involve contending views/interests (Hilgartner & Bosk 1988; Molotch & Lester 1974). Not all real-world environmental problems become issues in the news; the process that turns real-world environmental problems into news stories is complex and involves the dynamic interaction between journalists, claims-making actors in organizations, politics and science, and real-world-events (Carvalho & Burgess 2005; Hilgartner & Bosk 1988; Nisbet 2010).

The ‘constructedness’ of environmental issues is obviously a problem for a study on the environmental agenda in the news in the 1960s. How is it possible to find environmental stories in a period when ‘the environment’ as a concept and metaphor was not yet invented?

The strategy used in this study departs from the one common denominator of all major environmental discourses (Dryzek 1997); *the public concern over the negative and unwanted effect of human activity on the natural world, and the notion that environmental problems comprise the anthropogenic impact on living organisms and the natural environment in which they exist.*

By drawing on this ‘core conception’, environmental news is defined as news about the negative impact of human activities on the natural world, and all the societal processes and activities addressing these problems, e.g. research, technical innovations, life-styles, opinions, legislation and policymak-

ing.¹ Besides this 'core conception', however, environmental problems can be interpreted and defined in many ways and different environmental discourses express contending views of the problems in terms of magnitude/severity, causes, consequences and solutions (cf. Entman 1993; Gamson & Modigliani 1989; Hajer 1997). A key question for the analysis is how the attention to environmental issues and the environmental discourse evolved in the news in the 1960s and early 1970s.

How news (as an institution) evolves and changes

A key point of departure in historical institutionalism is that institutionalization involves both fundamental shifts and continuous evolution or incremental change. Historical change is thus conceptualized as consisting of formative periods where major changes occur, followed by longer periods of stability when actions are guided by previously established norms and routines, i.e. 'path dependency' (e.g. Capoccia & Kelemen 2007; Streeck & Thelen 2005). Although other models for change must also be considered, the idea of formative periods and path dependency is highly applicable to the study of journalistic practices such as news production.

The institutional arrangements that are established during the initial formation of environmental news reporting will, if they are path dependent, have a long-term impact on the way television journalists relate to environmental problems. Journalists continue to follow the established norms and routines until critical events (which can be external and/or internal to the news organization) throw the practices off the established path, making room for new institutional arrangements to be formed. If transformative changes are rare and if environmental reporting is path dependent on the genre conventions that were established already in the formative years, the specific circumstances that fostered environmental reporting in the 1960s may still have an impact on how journalists relate to the environment today.

The study examines how environmental reporting evolved in the 1960s and, following the historical institutionalist line of thought, the extent to which there have been formative periods followed by longer periods of stability. Is environmental reporting an institutional practice that is path dependent on the genre conventions that were established in the formative years?

Sources, data and method

The analysis of how the reporting on the environment was institutionalized in television newsrooms is part of a long-term research project on the history and longitudinal development of environmental news reporting in Swedish public service television over a 50-year period. The empirical data and sources

include quantitative and qualitative analyses of environmental news stories, archival research and analyses of documents from the archive of the public service television news departments, and interviews with reporters specializing in environmental reporting from the 1960s onwards (Djerf-Pierre 1996, 2000, 2012a). The retrospective interviews with environmental journalists that are used in the present paper were conducted by the author in 1993.

The quantitative analysis included *all* news stories on the environment in the main newscast of *Aktuellt* (1961-1990) and *Rapport* (1970-2010). All stories were categorized according to a coding scheme consisting of eleven variables. Three of the variables are used in the present study: (1) the duration/length of news stories, (2) the main topic/issue of stories and (3) the type of interviewee (experts, environmental organizations, politicians, and 'ordinary people' etc.).

The qualitative text analyses were conducted in two steps. First, a large number of news stories on different environmental issues from each period were selected from the news archive. After a preliminary screening of the stories, a corpus of texts was selected for in-depth analyses. The selected stories were chosen to represent typical and important news stories from each period, with a focus on longer stories that included interviews and/or reportage. For the period examined in this paper, 63 stories were selected for analysis (33 from *Rapport* and 30 from *Aktuellt*). The qualitative analysis involved the qualitative 'coding' of the discursive properties of news stories (i.e. how the environmental problem is described in terms of magnitude/severity, causes, consequences and solutions) and the journalistic form of the news stories (the role of the reporter in the stories, including the way interviews were conducted, and how reality is represented in the news including the audio-visual design of stories).

Discovering the environment – issue attention and the environmental discourse

In the early 1960s there was only one television channel in Sweden. The only news show was *Aktuellt*, which started in 1958, aired three nights a week, but daily news broadcasts commenced in 1963. *Aktuellt* was a modern news programme for its time; it was led by an anchor and contained a mixture of reportage, interviews and news bulletins. News stories were brief and commonly consisted of footage accompanied by voice-over commentary. News reporting followed an objectivist ideal which had been the norm for Swedish broadcast journalism since the 1950s (see chapter 14). The focus was on reporting the facts, strictly adhering to neutrality and balance.

The news agenda in the early *Aktuellt* contained a mixture of human interest stories, accidents, crime, sport, science news, and international news. Political news was scarce in the early years, but increased from 1963 onwards. The

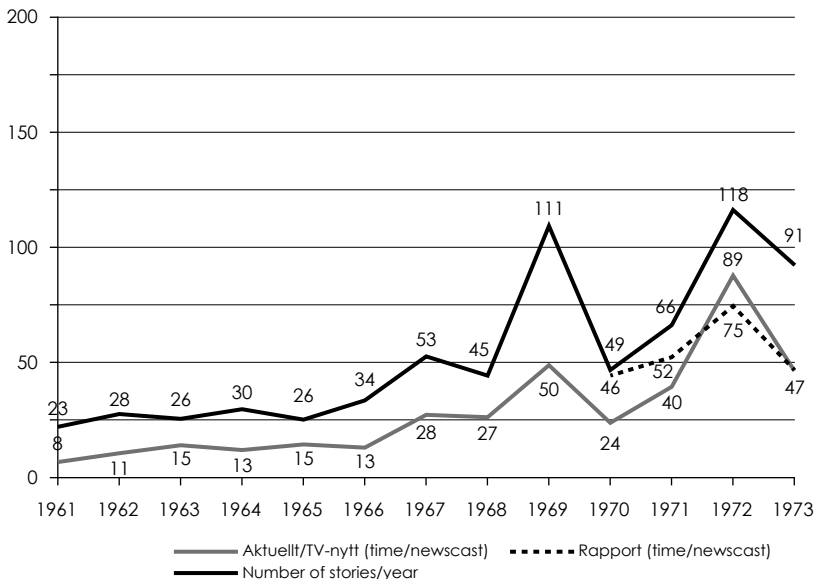
concept of 'environmental' problems or issues was not mentioned at all in the news in the 1960s, but there was still a considerable amount of coverage that we today would regard as belonging to the environmental domain.

The first wave of attention

As the abovementioned 'core conception' definition of environmental news is applied, we find 23 environmental stories in 1961. Three-quarters of these were news on the risks related to nuclear tests, targeting the radioactive fallout from Soviet nuclear tests in the arctic region. This reporting was, at least thematically, surprisingly similar to the reporting on the fallout from the Chernobyl accident that happened 25 years later in 1986. Coverage included stories on how the native population (the Sami) suffered from exposure to the fallout, and the measuring of radioactivity in rain water and in reindeer meat.

In the following years, 1962-1966, the number of stories remained low, hovering around 30 each year (Figure 1). Content wise, the stories mainly dealt with water pollution (the eutrophication of lakes and streams due to untreated sewage and the over-use of phosphate detergents), environmental conservation (wildlife conservation and the creation of national parks), air pollution (the quality of the air in cities, smog, air pollutants and sulphur emissions) and littering, dumps and household waste-disposal (Table 1).

Figure 1. The attention to environmental issues in *Aktuellt* (1961-1973) and *Rapport* (1970-1973) (seconds per newscast and number of stories per year)



Comment: The graph showing the number of environmental news stories per year is based on figures for *Aktuellt* 1961-1969 and *Rapport* 1970-1973.

One topic that *was not* covered in the news in Swedish television was the publication of the book *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson in the U.S. in 1962. The Swedish edition of the same book also came out a year later without being noticed in *Aktuellt*. Other radio and television programmes did, however, discuss the book and its message in 1963 and the issue was also debated by scientists, wildlife experts and ornithologists and the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation at various conferences and meetings. *Silent Spring* is commonly credited with providing the spark that launched the environmental movement, at least in the U.S. The specific focus of the book was the harmful effects of pesticides, particularly DDT. The substances were shown to be lethal not only to birds and insects but to humans as well; DDT accumulates in the food chain and causes cancer and genetic damage.

In Sweden, television news coverage of the biocide hazard began to appear in 1964. However, the public debate on biocides did not focus on DDT but on mercury, a toxic substance which has similar effects to DDT on wildlife. It was used in industrial processes but also in agriculture, to protect seeds from fungus and rot. Initially the reporting targeted the risks for wildlife (particularly birds), but later when mercury was also found in chicken eggs (1965) and in fish (1967-1968) the reporting was intensified as the direct threat of mercury to human health was exposed. Lakes were blacklisted due to high levels of mercury in the fish and the resale of fish from blacklisted lakes and streams was banned.

In 1967 the number of environmental stories increased to 53 (28 seconds per newscast) and there was frequent reporting on mercury pollution and the blacklisting of lakes combined with a large number of stories on oil spills, most notably when the tanker *Torrey Canyon* was wrecked on the coast of Cornwall in England. Also, protests and controversies over the damming of the river Vindelälven and the environmental damage caused by rapid development of hydro-electric power received considerable attention from 1967 onwards. The year 1966-1967 also marks the start of the Swedish debate on acid rain. The initial coverage identified sulphur emissions as an air pollutant that poses a threat to human health, and it was not until later that attention turned to sulphur-dioxide emissions as the cause of acid rain and acidification of lakes and streams.

From 1968 industrial pollution became a main issue on the news agenda. A key part of this coverage concerned the contribution of industry to the mercury threat, but other types of industries and pollution were also reported. In 1969 reporting on industrial pollution continued, but coverage also included several new issues such as the pollution of oceans and the use of pesticides in forestry.

In December 1969 a second public service television channel was launched (SVT2), and the new channel entailed a new organization for television news. The new channel hosted its own news programme, *Rapport*. For a brief period the news programme on SVT1 was renamed *TV-nytt*, but in 1972 a news organization was put in place that would last for over 30 years: SVT1 broadcast

Aktuellt at 9 pm and SVT2 *Rapport* at 7.30 pm. Because of its prime-time slot, *Rapport* attracted the larger audience.

Initially *Rapport* focused heavily on the use of pesticides in forestry and how it caused health risks to local residents and forestry workers. Other much covered issues in *Rapport* in 1970-1971 were the debate on the damming of rivers and acid rain, and a great deal of attention was given to the threat to sensitive coastal environments from the siting of polluting industries. In *TV-nytt* the focus in 1970-1971 was on the controversy over the damming of rivers and oil spills. From 1972 the environmental agendas converged and the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment which was held in Stockholm in June 1972 was the centre of attention. The proceeding of the conference and the specific issues that were discussed at the official assembly, but also at the 'alternative' conferences that were arranged to protest against the official conference agenda, were covered extensively by all the news media, including television. Much attention was given to international issues, such as the 'environmental war' carried on by U.S. in Vietnam, and the French nuclear tests in the Pacific Ocean.

The analysis of the environmental agenda in the news in the 1960s and early 1970s thus shows that although environmental reporting initially concentrated on just a few, solitary issues, the agenda soon became quite diverse. In just a few years, the range of topics increased and by the end of the 1960s most of the subject areas that are still on the environmental agenda had been the target of news reports. Indeed, several of the issues that remain critical today, such as acidification and eutrophication, were recognized in the news already in this formative period. The environmental coverage reached its first peak in 1972, both with regard to the broadcast time allotted to the environment and the number of stories on the subject (118 stories/year and 75 seconds/day in *Rapport*). The attention decreased in 1973, and a new political conflict emerged around nuclear waste and the use of nuclear power in Sweden. The latter was indeed to become a main issue on the news agenda for the decades to follow.

Table 1. Issue categories in environmental news reporting in *Aktuellt* (1961-1969) and *Rapport* (1970-1973) (%)

	Aktuellt								Rapport				
	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973
Water pollution/ quality	0	10	27	10	8	6	2	7	13	12	6	9	7
Lakes and streams	0	4	19	10	8	3	2	4	4	0	0	3	0
Oceans	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	8	4	4	6
Air pollution/ quality	0	4	0	13	11	12	6	2	3	8	9	2	2
Acidification	0	0	0	0	0	6	2	2	2	0	8	1	2
Smog/ air quality in cities	0	4	0	7	8	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0

Table 1. Cont.

	Aktuellt					Rapport								
	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	
Biocides	0	0	0	13	23	12	25	13	7	27	9	14	12	
Pesticides in forestry	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	18	6	12	9	
Mercury	0	0	0	13	23	6	25	13	4	4	0	1	1	
Traffic and transport	0	4	0	3	8	14	0	11	4	2	11	6	11	
Lead in petrol/fumes	0	0	0	0	8	14	0	4	3	0	6	2	1	
Sitings of roads and bridges	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	
Workplace environment	4	4	4	10	8	3	6	0	4	2	11	8	6	
Silicosis	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	
Asbestos	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	
Environmental conservation	9	35	27	10	23	12	15	16	14	6	20	3	4	
Hydropower, damming of rivers	9	7	4	0	4	0	11	13	10	6	11	1	3	
Wildlife conservation	0	21	19	7	19	12	4	2	4	0	5	1	1	
Industrial pollution	4	4	0	7	8	9	2	18	15	10	21	15	19	
Sitings of industries	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	2	3	6	17	6	1	
Pollution from specific industries	4	0	0	3	8	6	0	9	3	2	2	7	8	
Oil spills	0	4	8	13	11	9	32	20	16	4	0	3	6	
Nuclear power	4	0	12	0	0	0	0	4	4	8	3	2	12	
Nuclear waste	4	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
Sitings of nuclear plants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	6	0	0	2	
Nuclear tests/war	74	17	15	3	0	6	3	0	4	0	1	14	9	
Waste, dumps, littering	4	7	4	10	0	9	6	4	2	6	0	2	6	
Food production/quality	0	4	0	3	0	0	0	2	7	6	4	1	2	
Forestry/clear-cutting	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	
General environmental politics	0	7	0	0	0	6	3	2	3	4	2	6	0	
Other	1	0	3	5	0	2	0	1	4	5	1	15	3	
Sum	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	

N= (number of stories)

23 28 26 30 26 34 53 45 111 49 66 118 91

Comment: Main categories (summarized to 100%) in bold.

From conservationism to survivalism

The environmental discourse throughout the 1960s can be categorized as conservationist or 'administrative-rationalist' (cf. Dryzek 1997). This discourse takes the economic-political status quo of industrialism as given and sees economic growth as a necessary means to afford the cost of environmental measures, insisting that environmental degradation can be controlled if handled rationally by experts (producing knowledge) and effective government control. This outlook is clearly demonstrated in a story on air pollution from 1967 (Example 1). Environmental problems were defined as scientific-technical problems and the proposed solution was the development of new technologies, provided they are not too expensive.

EXAMPLE 1: *Aktuellt* 16 February 1967 (Frank Nystrandh reporter):

Reporter (VOICE OVER, visuals described in brackets): The main cause of the pollution (city, high rise buildings and traffic) is the oil-fired heating of homes. Large quantities of sulphur dioxide are emitted daily from buildings. But industries (industrial chimneys, smoke stacks) that use crude oil as fuel, oil refineries and oil-fired power-stations also contribute to the high concentration of sulphur dioxide in the air. Professor Cyrill Brosset at Chalmers University of Technology, what possibilities are there to mitigate the problem, particularly with respect to the emissions from residential areas?

INTERVIEW with Cyrill Brosset in his office:

Brosset (close-up) To get rid of the sulphur dioxide we could either remove the sulphur from the oil, but that is too expensive at the moment. Or we could clean the flue-gas and remove the sulphur dioxide, but that is expensive too. Neither is frankly speaking feasible at the moment. The remaining alternative is to let the sulphur dioxide out in such a way that it does the least possible damage. And this means using higher chimneys so that the emissions are placed very high up in the atmosphere where they become diluted so that the air quality can be kept at an acceptable level on the ground.

Reporter (asking question): Such a development would increase the construction costs and increase the rents?

Brosset: (close up): Chimneys are indeed expensive and high chimneys cost even more. /.../[Brosset continues to describe the costs and finally argues that the development of a district heating system would solve the problem since cities with district heating have much better air quality].

In the news, the state of the environment was described as problematic but hardly catastrophic. The discourse focused on local and national problems, issues were treated as isolated – and relatively peripheral – problems and there

were few references to international or global aspects. Above all, as is also evident in Example 1, environmental concerns were perceived as subordinate to the country's social and – most importantly – economic development. A fundamental premise was that environmental concerns must be weighed against other legitimate interests, i.e. economic and social progress. A recurrent theme in reporting was various trade-offs between threats to the environment and to health on the one hand, and economic growth and employment opportunities on the other. That the latter was given priority was generally considered as 'common sense'.

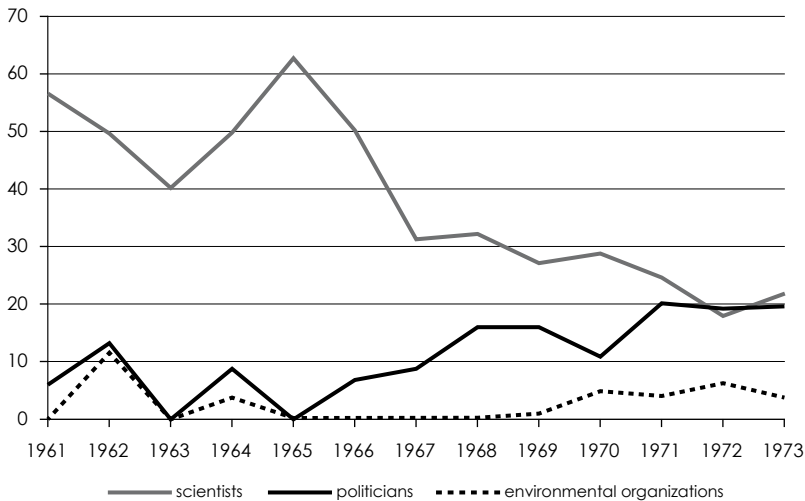
The natural environment was looked upon as a resource to be exploited, and the commitment to conservation and environmental protection corresponded to its perceived social and economic value. Environmental problems were to be addressed through science-based technological measures, the patent response being calls for 'new technology' and 'more research'. Problem-definition, i.e. the identification of causes, consequences and possible solutions, was the privilege of acknowledged experts.

Environmental issues were generally constructed as problems of knowledge, not of policy, and there were few explicit political controversies or debates over the new problems that appeared on the agenda. Political actors were virtually absent from reporting, and if national or local government officials appeared in the news it was not to state their opinions or to partake in political debates. The consensual outlook and lack of politicization is reflected in the choice of news subjects and interviewees in stories. In the initial phase there was a clear absence of politicians in the news. Instead, scientists totally dominated the news agenda (Figure 2). The environmental movement was gradually forming in the late 1960s, but its representatives were seldom given the opportunity to speak; environmental organizations and activists constituted only 6 per cent of the interviewees in 1972 and even fewer before that.

Just as in many other countries, members of the scientific-administrative community largely steered the course of public discourse on the environment in the 1960s. There was considerable uncertainty and lack of knowledge as to how environmental problems should be dealt with, both within and outside the newsrooms. This, of course, made journalists heavily dependent on the available sources. Much coverage occurred in response to external initiatives, e.g. seminars and press conferences to which the journalists were invited. Sources were rarely, if ever, subjected to critical scrutiny, and the expert views were seldom questioned. The discourse directly reflected the dominant scientific-technocratic ideology among elite actors in politics, agencies, and in science at the time. Environmental policy was just emerging, what was to become the green movement was still weak and few voices were raised in criticism of technocratic policies. Since the prevalent ideal of television news reporting at the time was to serve as a neutral 'mirror' on society (see chapter 14), it

is hardly surprising that dominant elite conceptions of the environment and environmental problems were so clearly reflected in the news.

Figure 2. Scientists, politicians and environmental organizations as interviewees in television news stories 1961-1973 (%)



Comment: Interviewees in *Aktuellt* 1961-1969 and *Rapport* 1970-1973 (percentage of all interviewees appearing in news stories or in studio interviews). The total number of interviewees each year varies from 16-28 in 1961-1966, 48-50 in 1967-1978, and finally 75-186 in 1969-1973.

This environmental discourse underwent a significant shift in just a few years in the early 1970s and gradually it began to express survivalist and 'limits to growth' conceptions. The discourse of survivalism locates the root of environmental problems in capitalism and consumerism, claiming that the earth's resources are finite and that economic growth must be restricted to save the environment, thus implying that drastic changes are needed in the way we live our life on earth (Dryzek 1997). In the news, environmental problems were increasingly portrayed as national or even global catastrophes. The state of the environment was consistently described as acute, catastrophic and threatening. Alarms came in a steady stream and the outlook was pessimistic. Indeed, almost one-third of the news stories in *Rapport* in 1970 can be said to convey an environmental 'alarm'. Damage to the environment was now described as a serious risk to life on earth, causing death and extinction unless effective, comprehensive corrective public policy measures were implemented. Problems were described as parts of a single domain of issues, joined together under the 'environmental problems' umbrella.

The conflict between environmental protection and economic growth was a recurring theme in the discourse in the early 1970s. Survivalist/ecological and administrative/conservationist perceptions of the problems (and their

solutions) clearly stood in opposition to each other. The ecologization of discourse conveyed an ethic that questioned the right of human beings to exploit nature and natural resources at will. The focus rested increasingly on the impact of environmental degradation on nature as a whole, not just the health implications for human beings. In accordance with the survivalist/ecological perspective, the environmental discourse assumed a global view and environmental conditions in other countries, e.g. the 'third world' also became visible in the news. Still there was a heavy reliance on expert sources, but scientists were now often portrayed as the defenders of nature; the visual image of scientists shifted from men in white lab coats administering test tubes to bearded 'nature bums' in rubber boots pursuing their calling out in the woods. Ordinary people were, however, still rarely the subjects in stories; instead they appeared as objects, victims of polluting industries or negligent government agencies.

For the first time the news displayed a critical outlook on the experts and agencies that were responsible of providing the public information on environmental risks. The first signs of a critical stance appeared during the mercury debate in the late 1960s and this particular controversy can be regarded as the first public information crisis on an environmental issue in Sweden. The regulatory and controlling agencies such as the Swedish National Institute of Public Health were questioned, and accused of neglecting risks and giving false or incomplete information to the public.

After 1970 the critical stance was fully institutionalized in news reporting. The target of criticism was often industry, but government agencies – particularly those responsible for safe-guarding human health, and also the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (established in 1967) – were also held to account. Interestingly, politicians were seldom at the frontline when views clashed over environmental problems. At the time, politics was generally perceived as a solution, not a problem. Environmental degradation was portrayed as a policy-problem – i.e. a problem requiring corrective policy measures – rather than problems of (insufficient) knowledge. Despite the critical approach to all power-wielders, journalists' stance towards politicians exhibited a firm conviction that politics has the capacity to solve environmental problems. In interviews reporters were often urging policy-makers to act; when a new threat to the environment was exposed journalists immediately turned to government officials asking them 'what they plan to do about it', demanding policy measures that would regulate or even prohibit the hazardous substance, industry or product.

Portraying the environment: journalistic forms of expression

In the 1960s (particularly in the early period), news items were rarely selected primarily on the basis of their visual features, and stories often lacked visual and aesthetic components. The visuals used in the environmental stories were conventional illustrations, such as footage showing smokestacks, chimneys or the smoking exhaust pipe of a car to accompany stories on industrial waste or traffic emissions or visual images of dead fish floating in polluted water to illustrate a story on water pollution. The images were often generic, meaning that they were often unrelated to the specific industry or process that was the main target of the story. A story on emissions from one industry could easily be illustrated with footage from another place, and the reuse of footage of the same exhaust pipe or chimney in several stories was a common practice. The news department's limited resources caused continuous problems with acquiring appropriate footage and visual illustrations were often borrowed from other programmes. Stories were essentially 'word-driven'; the voice-over commentary was the prime source of information, and visuals were typically used only to illustrate the spoken word. Journalists were telling, not showing, the audience of the environmental problem at hand.

When journalists did report from the scene in the 1960s, the dominant mode of representation was 'mimetic', i.e. reproducing events and situations in a way that placed the viewer as close to the scene as possible. In environmental reporting this meant, for instance, that a report from a science conference would be related chronologically, and the conference speakers would appear in the story in the same order as they did at the conference.

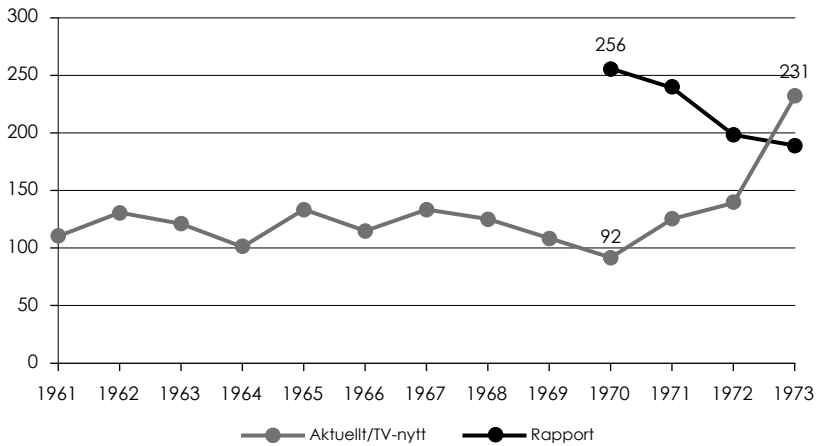
With regard to the role of journalists, news stories normally featured the journalist as a neutral and detached purveyor of information, present only as an invisible voice-over narrator. Interviews were characterized by politeness and questions were strictly fact-related or, if an opinion was requested, the journalist would politely ask an expert or an agency representative for a comment or a statement. Where, when and how something happened were the focus of stories and questions as to why and with what consequences were of secondary interest. There was little effort in terms of background, commentary or analysis. Essentially, journalists were neutrally relaying the current expert knowledge to the public.

The journalist as pedagogue and nature's ombudsman

The journalistic strategies for representing reality in environmental news underwent a fundamental change in the early 1970s. The new way of editing news stories was first introduced in *Rapport* and from 1972 *Aktuellt* followed suit. Most importantly, a shift occurred in how stories related to time and place;

instead of merely 'reproducing' events from a specific time and place by reporting them chronologically, stories now reconstructed overarching relationships. Footage and interviews from a variety of sources and places were collated to form logical and causal patterns, i.e. to form a coherent storyline. The environmental stories were relatively long, particularly in *Rapport* where reportages normally lasted four minutes or longer. Figure 3 shows that the average length of environmental news stories in *Rapport* 1970 was, indeed, over four minutes, compared with the one minute and thirty seconds in *Aktuellt*.

Figure 3. The average length of environmental news stories in *Aktuellt*/TV-nytt and *Rapport* 1961-1973 (seconds)



The launch of SVT2 and its news programme *Rapport* coincided with the general transformation of the normative foundation of news and current affairs journalism in Swedish television and *Rapport* was at the forefront of this development (see chapter 14). Reporting abandoned the objectivist approach and turned to a scrutinizing and critical mode of reporting. The explicit policy of *Rapport* was to document important social conditions and problems from a critical stance and the policy affected the selection of news stories (only 'importance' should guide the selection), but also the way news stories were constructed. The role of journalists in the early 1970s was clearly guided by a social pathos ideal, conveyed in the urge to scrutinize those in power and to educate the citizenry. The latter was expressed in sustained efforts to provide pedagogical explanation, lengthy background information and detailed analyses. All this was accompanied by a judicious use of footage and a heavy deployment of graphs, maps and visual aids to make news more comprehensible to viewers. Stories were told at a slow pace and the main arguments or facts were often repeated and restated several times. The pedagogical approach is clearly demonstrated in Example 2, a six-minute long story on acid rain and acidification of lakes from 1973. In the story

the journalist exhibits the fervour of a classroom teacher in her eagerness to make her students understand the important message. Analysis and background material form a central part of the story and she makes a strong effort to make the complex causes and effects of acid rain understandable.

EXAMPLE 2: *Rapport* 1 October 1973 (Barbro Soller reporter)

Reporter (VOICE OVER, visuals described in brackets): This is Lyse lake (pan over a lake), a clear little lake east of Stenungsund. But biologically speaking, it is dying. Here, the last perch hatched in the spring 1969 (two people in a boat, rowing). After that, the water became too acetic for the fish to reproduce. Normally the pH level, that is the acetic level, in a lake like this should be between 6 and 7, but this (the reporter pulls a measuring device out of the water) device, which is a pH-meter, only shows 4.5. Lyse lake is one of three lakes in Bohuslän where restoration attempts now are made (map showing the location of Stenungsund by a dot). They are all located in Svartedalen east of Stenungsund. The other three lakes that are included in the action plan are three forest-lakes north-east of Arvika (Arvika is marked by a dot on the map). In these lakes, biologist Hans Hultberg and Olle Gran (three people, the reporter and two researchers, leave the shore in a small motor boat) from the Swedish Environmental Research Institute have sampled fish and conducted several other tests that have shown that the natural biological processes are out of order (the two researchers working with the measuring equipment in the boat). The sediment samples taken from the seabed of Lyse lake only contain two things: (zoom in to a sediment sample consisting of black substances) Fallen leaves that form a thick carpet on the lake floor. The leaves don't decompose because the acid water has killed all the bacteria (hands that pull up the sampling device). And there is bog moss that invades the lake from streams and bogs nearby and spreads all over the lake bed (the researcher scrapes a sample into a box). The bog moss gives no nutrients back to the lake. On the contrary, it absorbs calcium from the lake, making the water even more acidic (hands showing the black and soggy mould in the sample). And it also binds other nutrients, such as potassium and magnesium, making the situation ever worse. (hundreds of beetles "dancing" on the lake) These beetles are whirligig beetles swimming on the surface of the water and they appear in millions in the summer. What is causing the beetle invasion is that the fish that normally eat the beetles have disappeared. And the background to how this lake, and many other lakes, (stone under water, a pine tree hanging over the water, sunshine reflecting in the water, sounds of water lapping) have become more acidic is that Sweden and other countries burn oil in industries and households. And the sulphur dioxide that is released into the atmosphere when the oil is burning is falling down again with the rain (map over Europe, blinking arrows showing the direction of the pollution travelling from other countries to Sweden). /.../ [the story continues for another five minutes, where the reporter continues to

explain how the pollution spreads to Sweden from Britain and Eastern Europe, how the fish suffer and die from the decreasing pH-level, and how attempts are made at restoring the lake by means of limingl.

With regard to the use of visuals in the environmental stories in the 1970s, realistic footage was now often used as documentary evidence to demonstrate the severity of the environmental problem at hand. The ambition among journalist was not only to tell but to *show* the audience the problems at hand, and visuals delivered the proof to sustain the catastrophic state of the environment. The stories included shocking footage and images of polluted lakes, dying forests, deformed or dead birds or fishes and even children; *the worse the better* seemed to be the guiding principle informing the selection of footage. Barbro Soller, environmental reporter at *Aktuellt* in the 1970s, was convinced: "The power of television rests on its ability to display the visual proof".²

The role of the reporter changed from that of a neutral conduit to an active and critical actor who independently selects, edits and presents news. No longer was it the norm that journalists should remain perfectly neutral to the subject of their coverage. Journalists took a distinctly higher and more active profile in interviews; critical questions replaced the previous politeness and submissiveness to authority. The new critical stance meant shedding light on problem areas, exposing scandals and sounding the alarm about environmental risks. Taking the side of the weaker party in a social conflict against ravaging 'capitalist greed' was no longer considered problematic. The general wish to document social conditions from a critical angle was reflected in environmental reporting when journalists implicitly or explicitly voiced an ecological/survivalist perspective, supporting those who were in opposition to untamed economic growth and the official technocratic policies. This, in turn, gave rise to an explicitly contentious perspective on economic development and environmental problems. In environmental stories journalists took on the role of advocates, siding with nature and the suffering victims of environmental degradation, speaking for the wildlife in need of protection and the ordinary people put in harm's way by environmental pollution. The role of ordinary people in stories was, however, often that of passive objects/victims of mistreatment, and they were rarely portrayed as subjects or agents in control of their own social situation.

Organizing for environmental news: the environmental reporters

When environmental stories began to appear in the news in the 1960s the staff at *Aktuellt* was still very small. None of the reporters had any previous experience, knowledge or specific interest in the subject area. Environmental topics were assigned so that they would fit the normal practices and existing

specialist domains in the newsroom. Given the predominantly scientific and technical focus of the issues at the time, the environmental stories were often ‘typified’ as science stories and thus assigned to the reporters who would normally cover science topics. Stories of a political nature were covered by the political reporters; stories from abroad by the foreign correspondents, and the rest were dispersed among the general reporters. Indeed, the 376 news stories that were broadcast 1961-1969 were produced by 141 different reporters. The two reporters who topped the list did 27 and 20 stories respectively, and it was clearly their long and faithful service as news reporters rather than a specific environmental profile that put them at the top.

From ‘general news’ to a specialized beat

The first reporter to focus specifically on environmental reporting was Bo G Eriksson who was hired in 1970. Eriksson was recruited to *Rapport* from public service radio where he had been a science reporter. His approach to the environmental domain was clearly to focus on the science and health aspects, and he was responsible for a considerable number of critical reports on the health risks associated with pesticides and similar stories on other pollutants and harmful substances. He was an avid supporter of the new critical stance in reporting pursued by *Rapport*, but perceived the radicalism of TV2 in the early 1970s as quite problematic: “I was working for a socialist-communist TV-channel. /.../ The accusations we got for being the red channel were not at all without cause”.³ He left *Rapport* in 1971, claiming that he grew tired of the negativity associated with environmental reporting and that he wanted to return to science journalism which had more possibilities for positive and optimistic news: “There were always these environmental alarms. It was always gloom and doom to the extreme! When I think about it, this was the reason I quit: I got dead tired of all the damned alarms.”⁴

When Bo G Ericsson left *Rapport* in 1971, he was replaced by a female journalist, Eva Marling. She came from the press where she had been a medicine reporter. Marling did not specialize in environmental reporting to begin with, and she considers the UN conference in Stockholm in 1972 as a breakthrough for both the environment in the news and for herself as an environmental reporter. Her profile in reporting had a consistent focus on the medical and health aspects of environmental problems and she did many stories on workplace hazards. She was clearly recruited for her professional expertise as a medical reporter and she had no previous broadcast experience: “We got no television training at all. You had to learn everything directly from the photographers and the editors. It was all trial-and-error.”⁵ Her view of the critical environmental coverage at *Rapport* was that it was the result of a “social pathos” rather than an explicit political bias:

Our news selection was partial and the coverage of work place environment was indeed politically charged. We had a clear social pathos, and it was very important to us to scrutinize and disclose wrongdoings. We did not, however, advocate a specific party political message. The 'red' period was quite short actually. And we were no more 'red' or radical than the rest of the journalist community at the time.⁶

Both Eriksson and Marling took up environmental reporting as part of their respective specializations in science and medicine, and neither considered themselves 'environmental reporters' exclusively. The first reporter to do so was Barbro Soller, who was recruited to *Aktuellt* in 1972. Soller also had a background in the press where she had been the first full-time environmental reporter in a Swedish news medium (at *Dagens Nyheter*) in 1964. Soller pursued a very broad issue agenda and she reported on everything from acidification, air pollution, and pesticides to nature conservation, food production, nuclear power and oil spills. Still, political actors were rarely targeted in Soller's stories and when politicians or environmental politics were the focus of a story it was, as before, normally assigned to one of the political reporters.

The three specialist reporters who covered the environment relied to a large extent on experts as sources. They all emphasize the critical importance of the sustained support from environmental scientists and they made frequent use of specific scientists who they trusted to be knowledgeable, fair and impartial. Environmental reporting was a new domain, and as such it had to struggle to attain legitimacy and status both in society and among journalists. Soller in particular insists that it was a constant struggle, and describes her working conditions as a "war on two-fronts". First because her work involved difficult investigative research with a critical edge towards the industry, agencies and policy-makers; environmental news was often negative news. Secondly, when the story was finished there was a constant struggle to convince the editors to run it and to give it a favourable slot.

At *Aktuellt* national politics yielded the highest status. When I was hired as a reporter I was granted a good salary and free working hours, but I soon realized that I was free-floating in a very uncomfortable way. The political reporters stuck together and there was a group of foreign reporters but the rest of us were pushed together in a group of general reporters that was despised and treated with contempt.⁷

Soller stayed with *Aktuellt* until 1987, and the legitimacy and status of the domain improved over time. By the time she left, both the environmental beat and she as a reporter were treated with a greater respect.

The environment as a news-genre – formative periods and critical junctures

The institutionalization of the environment in television news reporting was essentially a three-step process. First, environmental topics began to appear on the agenda, but they were initially treated as science issues or 'general' news. In the next step the specific discursive and narrative features of the environmental news-genre evolved. In just a few years, between 1968 and 1973, the environmental reporting changed from portraying environmental problems as isolated problem islands that could be solved by technical and administrative measures to a full domain of interconnected issues that called for urgent political action; environmental issues turned from being treated as objects of 'consensus at the periphery' to 'conflicts at the centre of attention', thus shifting environmentalism from the sphere of deviance to the sphere of legitimate controversy in public debate (cf. Hallin 1986). By 1973 the concept of environmental problems regularly appeared as a label, symbol and metaphor for the negative impact of human activities on the natural world and environmental reporting had developed into a specialized beat with full-time environmental reporters employed in the newsrooms.

A similar institutionalization of the environment in the news happened in other countries as well, albeit there are very few studies available for comparison, and the studies that exist focus on environmental reporting in the press and not on television news (e.g. Brookes et al. 1976; Parlour & Schatzow 1978; Schoenfeld et al. 1979; Suhonen 1993). They all indicate that the formation of the first wave of public attention to the environment took place at a similar time and in similar ways as it did in Sweden. The key role played by elite sources, particularly scientists, in the coverage during the initial period is also clearly demonstrated in previous studies. The primary claims-makers that sponsored the budding 'environmental idea' in the news were mainly experts, not activists or environmental organizations and not politicians.

What seems to be specific to the Swedish case is how quickly ecological notions were incorporated in the news and the extent to which the radical, survivalist discourse permeated television reporting in the early 1970s. The Swedish development is indeed a textbook example of a critical juncture, where external factors (the appearance of legitimate claims-making actors that promoted the environmental cause) coincided with the advent of a strong social pathos ideal and the establishment of critical scrutiny as a professional norm among television news reporters.

Has later environmental reporting been path-dependent on the discourse and modes of representation that were established in the initial phase? Yes, to a large extent. The coverage came to focus on new issues, the social pathos waned and the level of controversy ceased over time as environmentalism gradually

became something that no-one could be 'against' (at least not officially), but the basic discursive and narrative features remained stable for a very long time.

In the early 1990s, however, there was another critical juncture of external and internal factors that pushed environmental reporting off its trodden path (Djerf-Pierre 1996, 2012a, 2012b; Hermansson 2002). The de-regulation and commercialization of television news made television journalism more compliant with audiences' needs and desires, focusing on consumer issues and 'news you can use'. At the political level, the hegemony of neo-liberalism, the globalization of environmental concerns, the political challenge to tackle climate change and the impact of the discourse of ecological modernization on environmental policymaking provided a new setting for journalists covering the environment. Ecological modernization negates the opposition between economic growth and environmental sustainability, claiming that one is the prerequisite of the other (Dryzek 1997). With regard to policy measures, it favours market mechanisms instead of government control and places the obligation to act sustainably on individual consumers (to make the proper consumption choices), science (to develop green technologies) and private corporations (to innovate and put green products on the market). The result was a new environmental journalism that in some ways had lost its radical and critical objective; it was individualized, de-politicized, and marketized, focusing on green consumption and green technologies and targeting individual consumers as responsible for solving the global environmental problems the world is facing.

Notes

1. Industrial production and energy issues are defined as environmental when stories focus on the environmental implications of production and consumption. Natural disasters such as flooding and droughts are part of the environmental domain if and when they are framed as caused by human activities.
2. Interview with Barbro Soller, June 1993.
3. Interview with Bo G. Eriksson, May 1993.
4. Interview with Bo G. Eriksson, May 1993.
5. Interview with Eva Marling, May 1993.
6. Interview with Barbro Soller, June 1993.
7. Interview with Barbro Soller, June 1993.

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Institutional Changes:
The Example of News and Current Affairs

Chapter 14

Educator, Mirror, Watchdog, Interpreter

Regimes of news and current affairs journalism in public service broadcasting 1925-2005

Monika Djerf-Pierre & Lennart Weibull

Introduction

The long-term trajectories of news and current affairs journalism suggest two, seemingly contradictory, developments. Some observers put forward the notion of journalistic degeneration and decline, caused by increased competition and market pressure. Concepts used to describe this development are often commercialization, popularization, and tabloidization. Other observers advance the opposite argument, suggesting that there has been a process characterized by progress and improvement. They sustain this position by pointing out that journalism during the latter half of the twentieth century adopted professional ideals of objectivity, fairness and balance and that it has achieved an increasing independence from political institutions. Journalism has become an independent scrutinizer of those in power, fulfilling a democratic mission as the fourth estate; professionalization and modernization are concepts often used to depict this particular trajectory. Implicit in both these models of journalistic development is a notion of linearity and of sustained development.

This chapter examines changes in news and current affairs journalism in Swedish public service broadcasting (PSB) from the beginning of broadcasting in 1925 until the present time, with a specific focus on political and current affairs journalism. Drawing on an extensive and in-depth analysis of the development of news and current affairs journalism in Sweden over a period of 80 years, this article challenges the notion of a continuous evolution of journalism.¹ Rather, the long-term development of news and current affairs journalism in Swedish PSB can be understood as a sequence of periods where each displays a specific institutional logic or 'modus operandi' embedded in specific ideals and norms of journalism, here referred to as a journalistic regime.

Four periods of broadcast journalism

Theories of linear historical evolution are problematic for at least two reasons. First of all, they are normative, mainly drawing on an implicit notion of natural evolution. During the last decades, the applicability of such 'grand narratives' has been a matter of intense debate in all of the social sciences. Also, in recent years the equivalent grand narratives of journalism – the stories of professionalization, Americanization, convergence, and commercialization – have been reassessed and to some extent reconsidered (e.g. Blumler & Kavanagh 1999; Hallin & Mancini 2007; Holtz-Bacha 2007; Negrine & Lilleker 2002; Neveu 2002; Petersson et al 2006).

The notion of a linear development of news and current affairs journalism can be questioned on empirical grounds as well. Most importantly, the linearity argument is rarely sustained by longitudinal and/or comparative research. Several studies on political communication in Sweden, Norway and Denmark respectively dispute the hypothesis of a standardization and homogenization of the political culture in the Nordic countries (Jönsson & Larsen 2002; Karlsen & Narud 2004; Nord 2006; Petersson et al 2006) and other comparative studies offer mixed support for the alleged Americanization of political communication (Blumler & Gurevich 2001; Holtz-Bacha 2007; Plasser & Plasser 2002). With regard to political journalism, the evidence available suggests that there is even a high degree of continuity both in political campaigning and in political journalism in Europe as well as in the U.S. (Benson & Hallin 2007; Negrine & Lilleker 2002).

To be sure, media historians rarely advance theories of continuous evolution and progression. Rather, the general argument is that historical change tends to be discontinuous, ambiguous and multifaceted, and it is often brought about by the interplay of several conditions and factors in society and in the media (Bondebjerg 2002; Corner 2003; Scannell & Cardiff 2001; Schudson 1997). Still, there are discernible patterns in history; instances of major transformations are rare and often followed by longer periods of relative stability. Historians often conceptualize these historical patterns in terms of phases, periods or epochs (e.g. Banhurst & Nerone 2001; Bondjebjerg 1990; Bourdon 2001; Hjarvard 1999; Neveu 2002), although such endeavours also introduce "potential problems both of loss of difference within the categories and undue differentiation between them" (Corner 2003: 277).

This chapter adds to this area of research by examining key aspects of the major shifts and periods of stability in public service broadcasting in Sweden. The analysis mainly involves the study of broadcasting as an institution and as a professional practice, but also to some extent its role as a socio-cultural phenomenon (cf. Corner 2003: 275-276).

Four periods of news and current affairs journalism are identified: (1) education and enlightenment, 1925-1945, (2) mirroring objectivism, 1946-1965, (3)

critical scrutiny, 1965-1985, and (4) interpretation 1985-2005. Each period represents a specific institutional logic, or *modus operandi*, of broadcast journalism. The regime concept rests on a discursive argument, describing the dominant discourse within journalist culture in a specific social and historical context. A regime is constituted through the amalgamation of ideals and norms on the one hand and journalistic practices on the other. The discursive vantage point is thus not only found in the journalistic genre structures and rhetoric, but also in the implied audience. The time periods are defined based on how journalistic discourse has positioned journalism in relation to both the audience and to other societal institutions (particularly the political institutions).

Journalism always exists in a space defined by relations to other societal institutions (within politics, economy, culture etc.) on the one hand and the audience on the other. These relationships are characterized either by an active approach aimed at exerting influence or, conversely, by an approach of adaptation, compliance and adjustment. Specific historical social, economic, political and cultural forces shape the particular approach manifested in norms and the everyday practices of journalism. These practices may differ between national contexts, but they nonetheless display some similar traits in comparable regions of the world; Sweden and the Nordic countries typify what Hallin and Mancini (2004) call the democratic corporatist media-political systems. The strength, independence and cultural importance of PSB is one of the fundamental features of this model. To be sure, Sweden had one of the most long-lasting public service monopolies in the world. Although the monopoly was broken in the early 1990s, PSB continues to have an immense impact on and importance for political life.

The remainder of the chapter is organized as follows. First, we describe each of the four periods and regimes chronologically in more detail. The focus of this analysis is on news and current affairs journalism but with a specific emphasis on political journalism at large and on journalism's relation to politics and political life in general (see chapter 9 for an analysis of election coverage). Within each section, we start out by giving an overarching characterization of the regime of journalism with the fundamentals of the journalistic discourse during an era. Next, we analyse how this regime of journalism has brought about different genres and different spaces for politics and the political world in news and current affairs programming. A concluding discussion closes the article.

Education in the service of society

During the first regime of journalism in the history of radio, 1925-1945, radio was mainly a distribution medium, a megaphone or "an invisible trumpet" transmitting what others supplied (Bliss 1991; Hilmes 1997; Williams 1989). Telegram bulletins conveyed the news and in other fact-based programmes

experts presented matters of common concern. National radio expressed a consensus perspective on society; controversy was generally avoided. Party politics, political debate and other political matters with controversial connotations were treated with utmost caution. Although formally independent, the radio company maintained close links with public institutions, aiming at educating and enlightening the citizens. Thus radio served as – and sought to serve as – a public educator in society's service. Social appropriateness served as a primary selection criterion in news and current affairs programming.

Radio news: Starting as a daily communiqué

As in most other European countries, early radio started as a private initiative, but the Swedish Telegraph Agency controlled the development of radio (Hadenius, 1998; see also chapter 2). The first regular broadcasts began in 1923 from a station in the capital, Stockholm, which operated with the involvement of newspaper and magazine companies. Following a period of discussions it was decided that national broadcasting should be organized as a single-company monopoly. The monopoly was granted to Radiotjänst, a private company controlled by the Swedish press, through the national news agency (TT), and radio manufacturers. The director of TT was appointed director of the radio company while keeping his position in TT, hence the nickname 'The Double Excellency'. The Swedish Telegraph Agency supervised the company, and owned all broadcasting technology, from microphones to transmitting masts. Radiotjänst, the origin of PSB in Sweden, started its transmissions on 1 January 1925. From the beginning, news played an important role for the radio. It was a common interest for the press as owner and the government as supervisor that the national news agency TT was granted exclusive rights to broadcast news. For the newspapers, controlling the organization of news on the radio was of crucial importance to circumvent competition from the new medium. Similarly for the government, the semi-official status of the TT guaranteed responsible news reporting in the service of society. In the early days of radio, only one newscast of fifteen minutes was broadcast at 9.15 pm daily. The news, broadcast from the editorial offices of the TT, covered a wide range of topics from accidents and human interest to international news and sports. Party politics was generally avoided; when political news was included it mainly pertained to government announcements and proceedings. Telegram bulletins appeared as official communiqués, explicitly quoting official and institutional sources. Newscasts were sometimes criticized for being formal or dull, but at the same time they were appreciated because of their objectivity and, as one radio official expressed it in 1929, the TT radio news "opened a window to life. It has given back (the audience) the feeling of being part of the spirit of civilization".

Chronicling Politics and Society

An important genre of the new radio was lectures. Most of them concerned history and culture but also hygiene, new technology, medicine and sports. Economy and social issues made up about ten per cent of the 300 to 400 lectures each year. The lectures were mainly delivered by academic experts and were generally educative, often containing practical advice (Nordberg 1998). Current affairs were treated in so-called chronicles. Starting in 1927, a chronicle on parliamentary affairs and one on foreign affairs were aired every second week. The form of the chronicles was similar to that of the lectures and contained detailed presentations of facts. Even though the presenters were eloquent, their reports more resembled a schoolteacher than a political commentator. On the other hand, the parliamentary chronicle was often mentioned as evidence of the fact that radio actually could treat controversial issues in an unbiased way. Lectures were sometimes criticized for being biased. In one instance, a group of private shop-owners protested against a lecture presenting the consumer-cooperative movement, which they regarded as propaganda against private business. The reaction from the director of programming was typical of how such controversies were solved at the time; he invited the organization of private shop-owners to make a radio presentation of their ideas and activities. Balance was achieved by providing equal opportunities for interest groups to put forward their causes.

Current affairs party politics as a problem

In 1935 a director with no ties to the TT or the daily press replaced 'The Double Excellency'. One of his first measures was to establish a news department. In 1937, Radiotjänst started its first programme that contained 'news' not produced by TT. The format of the new programme, *Dagens Eko*, resembled that of a news programme and it predictably encountered criticism from the TT, since the TT still claimed its news monopoly. To solve the problem, it was decided that *Dagens Eko* only should broadcast interviews or commentaries on news that had previously been transmitted by the TT. Already in the first year there were almost 200 contributions, a third of which were interviews. True to its policy of avoiding controversy, *Dagens Eko* did not focus on politics and politicians, but concentrated on other domestic issues such as culture, entertainment and sport. The director of radio lecturing in 1935 maintained, that "radio was a medium of education, not of propaganda such as party politics".

Official propaganda, particularly programmes promoting the modernization and cultural education of the Swedish population, was however prevalent in Swedish radio at the time. It was party politics that was considered problematic. A programme series on the population problem was produced in cooperation with a government commission with economist and Social Democrat Gunnar Myrdal as secretary. The series was supposed to provide education on differ-

ent ways to solve the problem and it included several academic lectures. The series was later followed by a similar one, called *Lort-Sverige* [Dirt Sweden], where a well-known author travelled around Sweden and passed judgment on the poor hygienic conditions in the countryside. The government authority responsible for public health sponsored the series. Both of the series triggered heated debates. What made them controversial was neither that they contained official propaganda, nor that they were sponsored by public authorities. Instead, the common denominator was that they were publicized as public education and therefore should contain no political debate. The criticism arose mainly from the fact that the problems treated were politically controversial and that they gave politicians unequal access to radio. If representatives of the political parties were to appear on radio, they expected equal representation.

Radio as a public educator

To summarize, the early radio did not perceive its task as playing an active role in domestic political debate. In contrast to the daily press, which was considered to be the appropriate place for political debate, the radio functioned more like a public agency. Radio submitted to the demands of the dominant social and political institutions. Propaganda through radio was regarded as appropriate as long as it served the general public interest. The spirit of consensus was strong and there was no question but that radio should act in the service of society.

At the same time, this initial period also saw changes in the dominant ideas about what should be the function of radio in society. For the first decades of broadcasting, radio's position as a relatively passive conveyor of official information was completely unchallenged. It was an organization that carefully executed its task, providing what was needed for social modernization. After the mid-1930s, however, the programming company displayed an emergent desire to develop the unique qualities of the radio medium. This change in perspective, however, did not alter the fundamental role of radio as a public educator.

Information in the service of the public

During the second regime of mirroring objectivism (1945-1965), the relationship between radio, its audience and society gradually changed. The programming company began to show a growing interest in political life. However, the approach was to mirror events with strict adherence to the ideal of objectivity, neutrality and balance in reporting. Radio and television set out to report political events by presenting facts, and political information should be relayed unbiased and without prejudices. In comparison with the previous paternalistic educational role of broadcasting, this represented a profound shift in journal-

istic discourse. Particularly noticeable was a new kind of audience orientation, which addressed itself to satisfying the tastes of the listeners and viewers. Efforts were made to make political news and election programmes more interesting to the public. When new programme formats for political programmes were developed they were all launched with the explicit purpose of 'making good television' (cf. Esaiasson & Håkansson 2002 and chapter 9). This does not imply that radio had completely abandoned its prior authoritarian perspective, but rather that the operation increasingly came to be characterized by the balancing of audience and societal interests. Thus, this regime of journalism can be portrayed as radio and TV in the service of the public.

Mirroring modernity

The post-war era entailed new possibilities for the expansion of broadcasting. A second radio channel was started in 1955 and television was introduced in 1956. Television was organized as part of the radio company, and in 1957 it changed its name to Sveriges Radio. In the early post-war years the public displayed a growing interest in what was happening outside Sweden. In 1950 almost fifty per cent of the items in *Dagens Eko* focused on foreign affairs, compared with just five per cent on domestic politics. A new genre, the social cover story, was introduced, and it replaced the educating programme series of the 1930s. These programmes were based on journalistic research conducted by the radio staff and not sponsored by government agencies. The social cover stories set out to be unprejudiced, reporting reality as it was, but from an unbiased and detached stance. The programmes displayed a true faith in modernization and social engineering, reflecting the dominant ideology of post-war Sweden when social democracy developed the welfare state. Typical examples include programmes on the aging Swedish population (*Älderdoms-Sverige*) and on decision-making in a company (*Direktören och arbetarna*). On the one hand, these programmes reported on social problems; on the other hand, the topics chosen reflected the process of social modernization. Even when uncovering social problems, the programmes displayed a strong optimism and faith in political reform.

Audience expectations of radio now began to change. The communiqué form was considered old-fashioned, not the least in comparison with the popular journalism displayed in the successful tabloid press. Popular journalism seemed to meet a strong public response. The radio news department started hiring experienced newspaper journalists who were more in touch with audience tastes than the old academics. A radio newsroom was organized, focusing on the news value of stories rather than 'appropriateness'. The on-the-spot coverage of the two international crises in 1956 in Suez and Hungary was praised also in other media for being swift and serious. The coverage of domestic politics,

however, remained limited; in 1955, domestic political issues constituted less than ten per cent of the news stories aired on the radio.

The established model for reporting on controversial issues was that opposing views must be represented within the same programme and in the same form. In practice that meant that if one party refused to participate it could effectively prevent the programme from being aired. This 'veto rule' was naturally contradictory to the 'newsworthiness principle' now embraced by radio journalists. The first confrontation regarding the principle concerned a coalition government declaration by the Social Democrats and the Farmers Union after the 1956 election. The radio newsroom had made a summary of the statement and aired live comments from the two of the opposition parties. When the Social Democratic party leader refused to participate, the radio company decided after extensive discussions to broadcast the programme nonetheless. The decision provoked an intense debate on political journalism in radio. The Social Democrats appealed the decision to the supervising radio council. The council, however, found no reason for criticism since the radio news editor had offered the party leader an interview. As a result, the principle of newsworthiness was established also in party political news coverage.

Early television news – entertainment please

When Swedish television began regular broadcasting in 1956, the organization had a small staff and operated under severe technical and economic constraints. The first news programme on Swedish television, as in most other countries, was a newsreel, titled *TV-journalen*. It consisted of news films selected, edited and narrated by a single journalist, thus constituting the 'news department' of Swedish television for a few years. The first news magazine, *Aktuellt*, started in 1958 and provided news and news commentary on weekday evenings. It focused on sport, accidents, crime, science and 'soft news', e.g. human interest and entertainment, together constituting almost fifty percent of all news stories (Table 1). Less than one-third of the stories were what is referred to today as traditional hard news such as the economy, politics and international news. Domestic party politics was almost unseen. For the period 1958-1960 just 3 per cent of the news was devoted to domestic politics whereas 20 per cent of the stories reported on accidents and crime. The first managing editor of *Aktuellt*, Gert Engström, who was recruited from one of the major evening tabloids, presented his perspective on news programmes in a memo in 1958. He explicates a strong belief in news programmes that are entertaining and adapted to the preferences of their audiences:

In order for us to be sure that the viewers will come back to watch more, or, to put it more correctly, to create the sentiment among them that the news programs are something which they cannot do without, we must obviously

make sure to present selected news items which both amuse and entertain... The idea that news should be presented in an entertaining way is by no means novel...it is that very idea which determines the popularity of the news programs although no such program must forget that its first task is to provide news. The truth is that any program which wants to reach the top must find a way of 'seizing' its viewers. The best way to chain people to the television set is to give them news in an appropriate and accessible way ... It is important that we never forget who is our audience and that we relate the programs to those who watch them. Some day-time slots might be most appropriate for weather reports and market updates, other slots are better for easy entertainment and sport. Hard news should be avoided when we know we have a mixed family audience.

Table 1. News categories in *Aktuellt* 1958-1995 (percentage of all stories)

News categories	1958	1960	1965	1968	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995
Foreign and international news*	26	17	26	42	30	32	28	27	33	27
Economy	3	2	6	4	18	14	17	10	14	7
Politics	4	2	5	12	8	12	10	13	9	14
Social issues (health care, child care, social services)	2	4	4	5	4	4	7	6	8	7
Accidents and crime	21	23	12	9	9	3	6	12	9	20
Energy and environment	2	1	1	2	4	8	7	3	5	4
Business news	4	4	6	5	4	10	10	11	5	5
Culture and entertainment	7	10	6	2	1	2	1	3	3	3
Human interest	6	8	9	4	3	2	2	4	4	5
Sport	9	12	8	7	12	5	4	1	2	2
Science	6	5	7	3	1	1	1	2	1	1
Other news	10	12	10	5	6	7	7	8	7	5
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Number of stories	163	303	690	941	1139	486	606	710	879	681

Comment: The data consists of all news stories broadcast in the main newscast of *Aktuellt* during a sample of eight non-consecutive weeks each year (four weeks in 1958). The data for 1970 is from TV-nytt's main newscast at 19.30 on SVT1. * The foreign news category only includes 'hard news' – news from abroad on politics, economy, business, war and social issues (foreign news on accidents and crime, sport, science, culture and entertainment and human interest are included in the regular news categories).

Critical journalism – but cautiously

In radio, programmes on social problems gradually began to tread into more controversial areas. One example is a programme in 1959 concerning problems at a private children's home in Stockholm, *Internatbarn på Eugeniahemmet*. The

programme explicitly criticized the living conditions of the children, although in a very restrained manner. The owner complained to the supervising radio council, which, however, saw no reason why radio should not broadcast social cover stories even if they are fairly critical in their approach.

Television, too, introduced critical stances in its reports on social issues. A programme series that caused an intense debate was *Strövtåg i folkhemmet* (Ramble in the People's Home), starting in 1958. The critical approach of the programme was the attempt at displaying the backyards of modern Sweden and the public authorities' lack of understanding of people's problems. The new programme format *Utfrågningen* (The Interrogation) is perhaps the most important innovation in radio journalism of the 1960s. The format was inspired by John Freeman's interview programme *Face to Face* on the BBC. The basic idea was that the interviewer should not be a submissive 'microphone holder'; instead, he should confront the interviewee with direct and polemic questions. In Sweden, this format became known as 'shotgun journalism'; a strategy that proved effective in exposing political malfeasance. The strategy soon became employed as part of the election coverage in radio and television.

In service of the public

During this period politics became an integral part of Swedish PSB. The expansion of political news and current affairs programmes was however predicated on the programming company's claim for balance and neutrality in reporting. The efforts of satisfying the interests of the audience as well as those of political institutions evolved into an intricate and frequently conflict-ridden act of balance. The ideal of mirroring objectivism – to reflect actual events objectively – can be understood as a strategy on the part of radio to mitigate those conflicts. The professional claim for objectivity was essential for legitimizing the public service monopoly in a context of growing power of radio and television in political life. The broadcast media was becoming a core provider of political information for the Swedish public and the ability to provide (objective) information in service of the public was crucial to justify that role.

Scrutiny in the service of citizens

With the arrival of the regime of critical scrutiny (1965-1985), consensus no longer served as the standard for high-quality news and current affairs journalism. Gradually, a shift took place both in approach to the public and to the dominant institutions in society. An activist ideal with an urge to influence both the public and society was established both in relation to the audience and the societal institutions. The journalistic task acquired a critical directive. In

relation to the audience, knowledge gaps should be filled and citizens should be encouraged to engage actively in democratic life; and, in relation to the societal institutions, power-holders should be critically monitored and attention should be brought to social deficiencies and power abuses. The defining characteristic of this regime of journalism was that the broadcast media should scrutinize society in the citizens' service.

News as civic education

A radicalization of the political climate swept over Europe and the U.S. in the late 1960s and culminated in the early 1970s. As one of the most important purveyors of the public's images of the world, the broadcast media was deeply drawn into the political debate, both in Sweden and elsewhere. A second PSB television channel, (TV2, later SVT2) went on air in late 1969, and its launch coincided with the peak of the radical era. The new channel emphasized news and current affairs; news, factual programming and current affairs dominated the programme schedule of the new channel at the expense of entertainment programmes.

A central newsroom supplied both channels with 'factual' news, but each of the two channels was in charge of a news programme on evening prime time, *Aktuellt* on SVT1 and *Rapport* on SVT2. The news profile of both of the daily news programmes was in-depth reports, commentaries and analysis, focusing on the important social and political issues of the times. Almost 80 per cent of the news in *Rapport* was stories on political, economic and social issues and almost 20 per cent on domestic politics. The new active journalistic approach indicated a break from the mirroring ideal that had dominated journalism since the mid-1950s. The basic news-editing criterion was the social and political importance for the citizens. Oloph Hansson, *Rapport's* first managing editor, presented his views on news journalism when *Rapport* was launched, and he outlined a perspective on journalism which ran almost completely counter to the news-as-entertainment perspective voiced by *Aktuellt's* managing editor twelve years earlier:

TV differs from the press in format. That means that TV has to make tough priorities, so tough that many features of society will not be covered. Alternatively, you must compress information so much that it will run the risk of becoming incomprehensible to the majority of the viewers. Facing this dilemma my preference is with the first choice, i.e. to make tough priorities consistent with an explicit policy within which my channel has chosen to make significance and importance the main criterion. By this we mean events and phenomena which affect many people yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

Scrutinizing society in new genres

News and current affairs programming was also emphasized on SVT1, and the radical perspective on society was almost as salient as on the 'new' channel. The current affairs programme *Insyn* (Insight) started in 1971, airing in-depth reports on labour market issues with the outspoken perspective of the workers and labour unions. It also reported on other political issues from the same critical stance. The producers expressed clear educationalist ideals: television should explain the world to the audience and the programmes were to be controversial. The policy of SVT1 was generally regarded as 'a clear standpoint for the use of television as a medium of social and political emancipation, to increase the consciousness of citizens about the significance and meaning of social events'. SVT1 was also responsible for the production of several controversial programmes and current affairs reports, including the later infamous series *Från socialism till ökad jämlikhet* (From socialism to increased equality) in 1971. The main objective of this series was to critically analyse the history of the working-class movement in Sweden. The programme took an explicit Marxist stance, asserting that class struggle and class conflict is the prime mover of history. The Social democracy was described as betraying the former revolutionary ideals of the movement. This was the most provocative and daring attempt so far – and indeed ever – to test the limits of the freedom of speech in PSB television in Sweden.

Social criticism was put forward in fictional and artistic genres as well. The so-called TV2 Theatre produced a series of politically provocative plays. One of their most contested productions was called the NJA play (*Nils Johan Andersson*), broadcast in 1970. The play departed from a socialist perspective of class conflicts between workers and corporate managers and expressed a deep social criticism, focusing on the bad working conditions and lack of workplace democracy at the NJA steel mill. To counter the criticism against the programme the television company instigated what was called a 'balancing studio debate', where all the conflicting parties were given opportunity to express their discontent with each other and/or the slant and angle of the programme. In the 1970s, broadcasting this kind of debate was established as the default strategy of managers at the PSB to handle the criticism and discontent that was bound to ensue after the airing of controversial programmes.

The discourse of social criticism and conflict

The angle of social criticism that saturated political journalism during the 1960s and 1970s naturally caused a heated public debate, and controversy regarding the impartiality, neutrality and factuality of the news and current affairs programmes arose. The discourse of conflict that flooded current affairs journalism was contrary to the discourse of consensus that had characterized the previous eras of broadcasting. Even the news showed an evident increase in the level of conflicts

in reporting; indeed, the amount of criticism in the news increased 25 times from the beginning of the 1960s to the early 1980s (Westerståhl & Johansson, 1985).

The political consequences that followed showed that television now had crossed the boundaries of what was politically acceptable. The management of Sveriges Radio was deeply concerned about the accusations. One of the managers described his situation in 1971 as being “squeezed between several shields”. Sveriges Radio was criticized for being slanted to the left by the social democrats, the liberals and conservative parties, but PSB was also accused of being bourgeoisie and commercialized from parties and activists on the far left, groups that at the time had a noticeable impact on public debate.

By 1971 the board of directors of Sveriges Radio had had enough and directed a harsh and unanimous statement of disapproval of the management. Eventually, they responded to the criticism and instigated a more restrictive policy when it came to political and current affairs programming.

The new watchdog journalism experienced a rapid breakthrough during the latter half of the 1960s. Journalism was characterized by a will to transform society, but there was also a firm belief in politics being able to bring about necessary changes. A main feature of political journalism up until the mid-1970s can, paradoxically, be described as an expectant social criticism, a general faith in the power of social engineering. Current affairs programming was driven by a social pathos where journalists competed in exposing social problems that the political system should solve.

The controversy between broadcasting and political institutions faded towards the end of the 1970s. The accommodation was first and foremost the result of a mutual adaptation. Politicians had to learn and accept the new, active journalism, but radio and television too had to accept and comply with the demands of the political institutions. Watchdog journalism and critical scrutiny were there to stay, at the same time as new limits for what was politically acceptable were established. During the latter half of the 1970s, however, the political foundation became less pronounced. Instead, critical journalism became more associated with a routinized polarization and an anti-establishment, populist perspective in which ‘ordinary people’ were pitted against those in power. The exposure, the drama and the sensational aspects were considered important, not the results. Programming was driven towards a more pronounced audience orientation, where news and current affairs should entertain as well as inform.

Interpretation in the service of customers

In the fourth period (1985-2005) the journalistic ideal to actively influence the audience/public declined as PSB faced new competition from a growing number of domestic and international commercial television channels. The

ambition to educate and to promote civic duties faded as PSB tried to tackle the competition by adapting its range of programmes to the tastes and desires of the audience (see chapter 15). For news and current affairs journalism this was primarily expressed in the explicit effort to make the mediated interface between the audience and society more accessible and pleasurable.

The nature of these changes is often discussed in terms of commercialization and popularization, but to address the audience as customers did not necessarily mean the ‘dumbing down’ or tabloidization of reporting. Since Swedish PSB is free of advertising, PSB radio and television were not plagued by the cogent need to offer attractive target groups to advertisers. Still, the logic of the market had a distinct impact on programming policies; the audience orientation increased as a strategy for PSB to maintain its legitimacy (and its public funding) through high ratings for its programmes. A similar shift took place in other countries with strong public service institutions (cf. Hjarvard, 1999; Jönsson & Strömbäck, 2007). At the same time, the ideal of journalism as a scrutinizer of those in power remained intact. The combination of an increased audience orientation and a critical stance toward those in power generated a new role for public service journalism as an advocate and ombudsman.

The ideal of balance and fairness that traditionally had been the backbone of news and current affairs journalism in public service broadcasting was questioned. Broadcast journalism became differentiated and more heterogeneous as competing traditional and online media were trying to cater to an increasingly diverse audience, producing a wide range of ‘journalisms’. In this new cultural environment, the discourse of public service journalism positioned itself as a provider of interpretations of the increasingly complex world. Hence, we have chosen to characterize this period as interpretation in the service of customers.

Tabloidization of journalism?

The single most important factor influencing public service journalism during the 1980s and 1990s was of course the break-up of the public service monopoly and the launching of new radio and television channels. The introduction of commercial broadcasting in the form of satellite-cable channel TV3 in late 1986 and TV4, which was granted the concession for terrestrial transmission in 1991, changed the Swedish media landscape.

At the outset, TV4 tried to create an image of itself as a quality public service commercial broadcaster. During the following years those ambitions gradually declined, but the channel still invested much prestige and effort into its evening news show, *Nyheterna* (The News) although the news desk of TV4 was much smaller than the corresponding news desks at SVT. Just as in Denmark and Norway (and much earlier in Britain when ITV started as a commercial

competitor to the BBC, cf. Cox 1995) the new commercial channel introduced a popularized style of journalism. The principles for news selection were to include less politics and to emphasize the sensational (crime, accidents) and 'soft news' as well as everyday 'news you can use'. However, when the audience reactions to the new popular format were examined, the TV4 managers learned that the public appreciated the style and presentation but were wary of the philosophy of news selection. The conclusion was that *Nyheterna* had a credibility problem. That insight resulted in the news desk's return to a more traditional news format, with adherence to the criteria for news selection already established by SVT (Asp 1995).

With regard to hard news, there were few signs of declining attention to politics and international news in public service broadcasting in the period 1985 onwards. The number of news stories on domestic politics in *Aktuellt* was about the same in 1995 as in 1968 (see Table 1). The attention to crime and accidents displays a curvilinear pattern; over 20 per cent in 1958-60, about 5 per cent in 1968-1980 and back to 20 per cent in 1995. Sport and economy declined in the news in the last period, but this was not an effect of a diminishing news interest. Instead these subjects were moved to specialized news programmes.

Although TV4 started out with the explicit policy not to focus on traditional political news, a decade later *Nyheterna* contained about as much political news as the PSB channels. Taken together, popularization was most evident in the early 1990s and there is little evidence of a continuous trend towards more tabloidized television news (cf. Jönsson & Strömbäck 2007; chapter 14).

Distrust in politics: Current affairs journalism

The total airtime increased dramatically between the 1980s and 1990s but it was news and talk shows, not traditional current affairs magazines and investigative reporting, that accounted for most of the increase. The main talk show on SVT in the 1990s was SVT2's *Svar direkt* (Answers on the spot) with the programme host as 'the ombudsman of the audience', asking power wielders questions that the audience wanted to have answered.

In current affairs journalism a new scepticism towards the political system's capacity to solve societal problems was articulated in political stories. Here lays a significant difference compared with the previous regime of journalism in the 1970s; although critical towards political actors and institutions, journalism in the 1970s never lost faith in political intervention, legislation and other regulatory instruments of the state in solving social problems. One example of the new approach towards the political and administrative institutions is the current affairs series *Glasbuset* (The glass house) which started in 1990 on

SVT1. The programme was subtitled “Throwing stones at the Swedish welfare state”, and the ambition was to invite the audience to laugh at stupid bureaucrats and incompetent politicians. The populist, ironic and bantering stance was evident, as the producers stated their claims:

The Glass House will be a programme about us and them. ‘Us’ who are governed by ‘them’. This means the government, the bureaucracy and the politicians, who confine our lives with new legislation and paragraphs. It is the glass house of the bureaucrats and politicians we will attempt to throw stones at.

The most praised but also most disputed current affairs series on PSB television was *Striptease*, a series of investigative reports, launched in 1991. The programme departed from an underdog perspective on society, where the ‘people’ was pitted against the ‘elite’. Typical of *Striptease* was the sharp angles in stories, the provocative style of presentation, reporters who refused to be neutral in pursuing their mission, and the use of controversial methods for gathering evidence. In 2002, the successor of *Striptease* at SVT, *Uppdrag Granskning* (Mission: Scrutinize) provoked a massive debate when reporters secretly recorded what campaign workers were saying about immigration and immigrants to voters who visited their campaign stalls. The programmes were awarded several prestigious prizes, but this ‘assault journalism’ was also deeply questioned.

TV4 also launched a hard-core current affairs magazine for investigative and scrutinizing reporting, *Kalla Fakta* (Cold facts) which started in 1991. *Kalla Fakta* faced the problem of surviving in the competitive, market-oriented environment of a commercial channel. It received good reviews, but its existence was put into question on several occasions, not the least by the board of TV4. An attempt at a more popularized form of current affairs programming by TV4 was the talk show *Svart eller vitt* (Black or white), first shown in 1994. It was a late evening show aimed at a younger audience, providing high paced, intense debates and polarization. One section of the programme was ‘*Åsiktsmaskinerna*’ (The opinion machines) where a panel of celebrities clashed, trying to surpass each other in asserting controversial opinions. Topically sex and violence were recurrent themes but the most important aspect was to have people expressing sensational and thrilling opinions. The main commercial competitor of TV4, TV3 (broadcasting to the Swedish audience from London by satellite) focused on entertainment and popular drama. Its programming attempts in the category of current affairs had an unmistakable popular streak. In 1989 TV3 launched a popular talk show: *Diskutabelt* (Debatable), modeled on *The Morton Downey Jr Show* (USA 1987/88, see Örnebring, 2001). The aggressive and provocative arrogance of the host was something never before experienced in Swedish television.

Interpretive journalism

The advent of interpretive journalism constitutes a major shift in news and current affairs journalism in the most recent period of Swedish PSB. Interpretive journalism is characterized by four entwined features; critical expertise, speculation, advocacy, and meta-journalism. Journalists began to appear as experts in studio interviews, or as commentators interpreting reality to their audience. Taking on the role of ombudsmen of the public, journalists advocated the presumed interests and needs of the public/audience, conveying an explicitly critical attitude to political institutions in general and political authorities in particular. The journalists of the previous regime of scrutinizing journalism often tried to relay the professional knowledge of external experts in an instructive manner. In their new role as interpreters, journalists themselves assumed the position of experts, a role legitimized by their presumed professional expertise in their respective field (Petersson et al. 2006). The political commentary was no longer restricted to describing what has happened and why in political life. Instead, journalists conveyed what politicians think and feel, disclosing their hidden motives and considerations, telling the audience how they will react and what will be the likely consequences; speculation became a key aspect of political journalism. An additional feature was meta-journalism – journalism on journalism (cf. Esser & D'Angelo 2006). Political journalism became self-referential, re-mediating and re-interpreting events already mediated in the first place (Ekström 2003; cf. Esser, Reinemann & Fan 2001).

The 'critical expertise' of political commentators that had already evolved in the 1970s and 1980s gave journalists greater power to describe the political world, independently of the political parties (Neveu, 2002). Greater autonomy does not, however, necessarily entail adversarial journalism (Benson & Hallin, 2007). When coupled with the ideology of audience compliance, it defined a new role for journalists where "journalism produces the journalist as the advocate or ombudsman of the people in relation to those in power" (Hjarvard 1999: 245; Eide & Knight 1999). In the previous era of journalism an important ambition had been to narrow knowledge gaps and to promote civic duties. The power of persuasion was however based on displaying numbers of facts, telling the 'truth', sustained by documentary, realistic footage. Now journalists would unambiguously focus on convincing the audience, promoting a cause or arguing a thesis without hesitating to employ dramatic visuals and elaborate narrative techniques to capture and sustain the audience's attention and involvement. In the era of interpretive journalism, journalism ultimately ventured beyond the traditional notion of journalism: the unbiased, factual reporting of 'real' events.

Four regimes of journalism

The four regimes of journalism described in this chapter are characterized by different approaches towards the audience and the other social institutions, creating four different roles for news and current affairs journalism.

Figure 1. Four regimes of journalism

		Approach to the Audience	
		Adaption	Influence
Approach to Societal Institutions	Adaption	Information purveyor 1945–1965	Public educator 1925–1945
	Influence	Ombudsman & interpreter 1985–2005	Watchdog & pedagogue 1965–1985

The role of the public educator that was typical of the first regime came out of the approach of actively influencing the audience and an adaptation approach to societal institutions. The information purveyor role of the mirror objectivism regime was, on the other hand, the result of a philosophy of adaptation both to the audience and societal institutions. The position of the watchdog in the third period implied an active influence approach in both directions and thus laid claim to an independent position for journalism. The ombudsman or interpreter role stems from an adaptation approach to the audience combined with the approach to actively influence other societal institutions.

Returning to what was argued earlier, the evidence presented here does not support the idea of a general, linear development of news and current affairs journalism. The view that Swedish public service journalism has gradually become more audience-oriented over the past fifty years is not sustained by the present analysis: the pursuit of audience compliance in the 1950s is similar to the audience-orientation in journalistic discourse in the 1990s. There is also a striking resemblance between the activist ideal of the pedagogue, promoting civic duties in the 1970s on the one hand and the public educator striving for public enlightenment during the first era of broadcasting on the other. Both strive for social change and both express an implicit paternalistic view of ‘giving the audience what they need and not what they want’ (although ‘what the audience need’ is defined in very different terms).

The finding that interpretive journalism became a constituent element of PSB journalism in the era of deregulation is yet another example of the complexity and discontinuity (rather than linearity) of historical change in journalism. A distinct feature of interpretive journalism was its focus on delivering interpreta-

tions and opinions on events, rather than factual reporting. Interpretations are, inevitably, not new in news and current affairs journalism. In fact, it is one of the oldest forms of mediated discourse; commentary became an integral part of the press long before journalism as an institutional practice and profession was invented (Chalaby 1996).

The evolution of objectivity as a journalistic ideal, and the neutral, descriptive style of journalistic expression were closely connected to the growth of professionalism and of journalism as an independent social force (Schudson 1996). Professionalization, however, occurred earlier in the U.S than in the Nordic countries and whereas the Swedish partisan press up until the 1960s typically advocated the interests of particular social groups and analysed the world from the viewpoint of the group they represented, the claim for objectivity (codified in terms of 'factuality' and 'impartiality', cf. Westerståhl, 1983) was crucial for the establishment and legitimacy of the public service radio. In the present century commentaries have returned to public service journalism but they now rest on the purportedly disinterested, critical expertise of professional journalists.

Other key findings in the study indicate how journalism continuously "reinvents itself" (Deuze 2005: 447). The critical stance towards 'those in power' is a persistent professional ideal established in the 1960s and 1970s, and critical journalism clearly persisted in the new competitive era of broadcasting. But for its entire critical stance, the watchdog journalism of the 1970s rested on an unyielding trust in politics, faith in collective action, and a confidence in the power of political and social engineering. The interpretive journalism of the 1990s, by comparison, departs from profound distrust in political institutions in general but even more so in political actors' capacity to address societal problems (cf. Ekström & Andersson 1999).

When the critical expertise of journalists (and the norm of scrutiny) was fused with the market orientation (and the norm of audience compliance) of the 1990s, the role of journalists in news and current affairs journalism changed. Journalists appeared as ombudsmen of the public, taking an adversarial stance to other societal institutions with a mission to unveil any abuse of power. Their discursive role was to come to the defence of 'ordinary people' when they suffer the consequences of unwanted political decisions, or are victimized by rigid bureaucrats or greedy businesses. The ideal of critical scrutiny that was established during the 1960s and 1970s still prevails, but was amalgamated in the 1990s with audience orientation and market conformity, thus creating a new role for journalists as 'interpreting ombudsmen'.

The four regimes are clearly not unique for Swedish radio and television journalism. Similar developments can be observed in most of the democratic corporatist media systems in Northern Europe, in particular the Nordic countries, where there are strong links between the political institutions and the media

but also a high degree of professional independence for journalists (Hallin & Mancini 2004:74f).

We believe that the regime concept captures essential features of the *modus operandi* of news and current affairs journalism in different periods. Other possible choices of terms would be ideology or paradigm (Høyer & Pöttker 2005), but both are based on the idea of incommensurability; one paradigm replaces another. Our study corroborates the notion that 'new' media tend to borrow from 'old' media, and new genres tend to transform and accommodate old genres, in an ongoing process of remediation (Bolter & Grusin 2002: 45ff). Instead of sharp shifts and break-ups, genres and modes of representations established during a certain era have a tendency to live on, remediated into new shapes as layers of media history.

Note

1. A previous version of this chapter was published as Monika Djerf-Pierre & Lennart Weibull (2008), "From public educator to interpreting ombudsman: regimes of political journalism in Swedish public service broadcasting 1925-2005", in Jesper Strömbäck, Toril Aalberg & Mark Ørsten (eds.), *Political Communication in the Nordic Countries*, published by Nordicom (pp. 195-214). With regard to original sources and analyses it draws from a book published in Swedish in 2001 (Djerf-Pierre & Weibull, 2001) focusing on the development of news and current affairs programming in radio and television during the twentieth century. Four sources of empirical data were used in the research: (1) documents from the archive of Sveriges Radio, the Swedish public broadcasting company (containing a wealth of primary sources, such as documents on policy, protocols, as well as memorandums and informal notes), (2) official documents, such as government commissions and articles in the contemporary press, (3) interviews with editors, journalists and managers of the public service broadcasting company (in total 61 interviews), (4) quantitative and qualitative analyses of news and current affairs programmes from the programme archive of Sveriges Radio 1925-1995.

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Chapter 15

Challenges for Swedish Public Service Television

Competition and commercialization in the news market

Anna Maria Jönsson

Introduction

The development of the television system in Sweden can be divided into three main phases: the monopolistic system with one public service channel (1956-1969), the two-channel system with internal competition in the public service institution (1969-1990), and the multi-channel system with external competition between public service and private, commercial (Swedish and international) actors (1990-). This chapter will deal with the phase of external competition in the television market with a particular focus on challenges to and strategies used by public service media between 1990 and 2004. The analysis will contribute to our understanding of how competition works in the (news) media market and identify different strategies and consequences of these strategies.

One result of the deregulation of Swedish broadcasting in the 1990s was a huge increase in the number of actors on the market as well as an increase in output, and also a changed focus in the general output. Another consequence was an increased focus and debate about the effects of deregulation on the quality of the (public service) media and the possibilities for these media to fulfil the social contract and its role in society. News and current affairs can on the one hand be said to have been a tool in this competition and a strategy in order to attract the audience and strengthen the organization's brand; on the other hand the discussion on the effects of deregulation and commercialization has mostly focused on television news.

The overarching aim of this chapter is to analyse the challenges posed by external competition and the strategies used by Swedish public service television news with a particular focus on the first 15 years of the phase of external competition (1990-2004). How did the public service institution adapt to the challenges of the 'deregulation' and a changing media market where fundamental values were supposedly challenged? In order to identify and analyse strategies used and their consequences I focus on two areas: on the one hand the organization of news in Swedish public service television and the relation

to the audiences, on the other on the content and form of Swedish public service television news.

The discussions and analyses draw upon several methods and a wide range of material. Empirically the chapter to a large extent builds upon the book *TV-journalistik i konkurrensens tid* (Television journalism in the era of competition) by Jönsson and Strömbäck (2007)¹ and the primary data in that book are collected through interviews, document analysis (from archives, internal documents, etc.), press material, television magazines and content analysis of television newscasts (*Rapport*, *Aktuellt* and *Nyheterna*)² during 1990-2004. Aside from this material, the empirical analysis is based on previously published and unpublished data from other projects financed by Stiftelsen Etermedierna i Sverige.

Public service television in Sweden and the ‘deregulation’

According to the ideas of John Reith – the founding father of the BBC and public service – public service from the beginning was mainly about how to finance and organize broadcasting media. Public service was supposed to provide a way of operating media without any commercial interests and to supply broadcasting for the whole public (Reith, 1924; Syvertsen, 1999). An overview of public service research and debate reveals that it is difficult to find a single common definition of what public service is and how public service should be organized. Most agree, however, with the idea that the media has an important role to play in society and therefore should be associated with certain fundamental values like diversity, freedom and equality (cf. Blumler, 1992; McQuail, 1992). Public service in Sweden has thus, with the BBC as its main role model (see e.g. Briggs, 1985; 1995; Reith, 1924; Scannell & Cardiff, 1990), been about providing high-quality, diverse, non-commercial radio and television for all. The public service contract has been defined broadly in the sense that these media have been expected to provide information and education as well as entertainment (whereas the more narrow definition only focuses on information and education).

As for the case of Sweden, public service television is organized by the company Sveriges Television (‘Swedish television’, henceforth ‘SVT’). SVT started its regular broadcasts in 1956, and in 1969 a second channel was introduced in the public service organization, and with that a system of internal competition. This also meant internal competition in the news area since the two public service channels had one news programme each. External competition from commercial actors in the television market came into force when cable networks began to distribute satellite channels and in 1987 the first Swedish satellite channel (TV3) started to broadcast. TV3 broadcast from the United Kingdom in order to circumvent the rather strict Swedish legislation on television commercials but

has the Swedish audience as its target group. This model was later followed by several other Swedish commercial satellite channels.

In 1992, TV4, as the only commercial actor, was granted access to and permitted to broadcast in the Swedish terrestrial network.³ TV4 became the market-leading commercial broadcaster in Sweden and the main competitor to public service. Due to its privileged position as the only commercial broadcaster on the terrestrial network, TV4 was working under particular regulations with different demands on its content, some quite similar to the demands on the public service television (for example, rather detailed instructions about the news). This caused media researchers (cf. Dahlgren, 1999; Syvertsen, 1999) to reflect upon the meaning of public service and initiate a discussion about whether or not TV4 (as well as its counterparts in Norway and Denmark) was also to be seen as a public service media (although not part of the public service institution). Just like TV2 in Denmark and Norway, TV4 has also been called a public service 'hybrid' or 'public service light' (cf. Hjarvard, 1999). During the 1990s TV4 became one of the most popular channels in Sweden and played a crucial role as a competitor to SVT (not least in the news market).

The deregulation and dual market with commercial actors working side by side with public service media undoubtedly resulted in more owners, more channels and a huge increase in media output. When it came to the general television output the total share of informative programmes decreased in the Swedish television market after the deregulation. In the public service media, the share of informative programmes, however, remained stable. Between 1993 and 1998 the share of news and current affairs programmes on SVT actually increased from 44 to 50 per cent (Asp, 1999). Commercial channels broadcast more entertainment and fewer informative and education programmes than public service, and commercial channels also had a much larger share of foreign (mainly from the USA and England) programming. The commercial channel that was most similar to public service was TV4. In 1993, the share of news and current affairs programmes on TV4 was 38 per cent and in 1998 this share had increased to 41 per cent (Asp, 1999). In this sense TV4 made it difficult to draw a line between commercial and public service television based only on programming profiles.

The situation for public service after the deregulation can be described in terms of a dilemma in that on the one hand they had to produce and distribute programmes which attracted a large enough audience to motivate the preservation of the licence fee, and on the other hand they had to present an alternative to the commercial channels and broadcast more 'narrow' programmes with the aim of informing and educating (cf. Hadenius, 1998). At the same time as the television output was increasing, media consumption stayed fairly (and perhaps surprisingly) stable. Public service television in Sweden after the deregulation also kept a strong position in terms of share and reach, but at the same time

SVT (and especially SVT2) lost ground compared to TV4 and other channels. In 1994, SVT's share of the television audience was 54 per cent (on an average day), while TV4 had 26 per cent. Ten years later SVT had 40 per cent while TV4 had 24 per cent (MMS, 2004). The main problem for public service after the deregulation was that they gradually lost the young audience to the commercial channels, a tendency that was later reinforced by the digitalization of the media market. The use of and support for public service media generally increased with age and education (Jönsson, 2000).

During the first part of the 1990s and the beginning of the era of external competition, SVT worked hard to keep the audience share. The former MD Sam Nilsson launched and pursued the '50 per cent goal', meaning that SVT should have at least 50 per cent of the television audience share. This vision caused some to claim that SVT focused too much on entertainment programmes, and one good example of this is the debate about the widely criticized programme *Expedition Robinson* (Survivor), produced by the independent production company Strix Television and broadcasted for the first time on SVT in 1997 (until 2003; from 2004 the programme was taken over by the commercial channels – first TV3 and then TV4). The tabloid paper Expressen wrote: *"This year's 'Expedition Robinson' has its final tonight. The end for this time. This should also be the end of the television licence fee. The Robinson adventure has come to symbolize the things public service television really should not be doing."*⁴ In an analysis of the management of SVT between 1997 and 2000, Lindén (2011) among other things shows how SVT by itself broadened the content objectives set by the government in order to raise competitiveness towards commercial rivals, and that the organization culture and internal processes were clearly integrated with a market logic.

At the beginning of the 1990s the main question was how Swedish public service should relate to the new competition from commercial channels and programmes, and what role public service had to play in the new dual market (Djerf-Pierre & Weibull, 2001). In contrast to many other public service organizations around Europe, Sweden stuck to the model with licence financing and no commercials in the public service media. For politics and research as well as the public debate, the deregulation resulted in a focus on what was happening with the television content (generally as well as in the news), discussed in terms of commercialization, popularization, convergence and diversity.

Competition in the television news market

In a theoretical and also an everyday sense, competition means a struggle about positions and different forms of resources and capital. Depending on ideological outlook, competition can be seen as both stimulating and a positive driving

force, or from a critical perspective as a threat to fundamental democratic values. For television news, competition can come in different shapes and also involve different actors. Increased market competition can cause internal conflicts in organizations and a clash between different goals and values permeating the different levels and departments in the organization. It is also important to note that competition is as much an idea and a perceived situation as a reality. This underlines that competition is a multidimensional phenomenon and that it takes place at different levels (e.g. media systems, media organizations, journalists, etc.) and in different arenas or markets.

In the particular case of the (news) media, what is distinctive is that they perform and work in several different arenas at the same time. The perceived importance of different arenas or markets can vary over time and also between different parts of the media system and organization. John McManus (1994) identified four different markets for news media, each with different characteristics in terms of exchanges and relations: market for audiences, advertising market, stock market and market for sources. The core of his argument is that commercial media needs capital (economic and symbolic), audience(s) and an attractive media content. Economical capital can be gained at the stock and advertising markets, audience(s) at the market for audience, and news and sources at the market for sources. To get access to these desired capitals, the media also has to offer something in return. In the market for audience they offer content and output in exchange for the attention and time of the audience; in the advertising market they offer the time and attention of the audience in exchange for financial revenues; in the market for sources (news market) they again offer the attention and time of the audience but this time in exchange for attractive news; and finally on the stock market they offer future profit(s) in exchange for capital for investments (cf. McManus, 1994).

Considering the differences between the American media market and the media in Europe and Scandinavia, and not least considering the strong position of the public service institution in countries like Sweden, at least two more markets must be added in an analysis of competition in the television market: a market for symbolic capital (closely related to the concept of branding), and a market for staff and personnel. The market for symbolic capital is about legitimacy and credibility, important values for audiences, advertisers and investors alike (as well as for politicians), and perhaps most important for public service media since these media in Sweden are not allowed to broadcast commercials. The market of staff and personnel is in some senses also related to branding and in this market the media offer employment and a salary in exchange for the time and competence of the staff (e.g. the journalists).

However, the most important market for all actors, including the public service media, is the market for audiences (even if the markets are intertwined, and success in one market is related to the position in other markets). In the

market for audience(s) all actors compete with each other on a general level and this is particularly true for news programmes where audiences can be expected to choose between different programmes (and channels) for updated news. News programmes also compete with other kinds of television output and therefore what is shown on the other channels at the time of a particular news show becomes important. Newscasts are an important part of the profile and brand of the channel. Those who regularly watch news on a certain channel also tend to have a more positive attitude to the whole channel and to watch it more often.

Let us now look at challenges posed by competition and the strategies (pro-active as well as reactive) used by Swedish public service television news. In the next section, organizational strategies and news audiences will be analysed and thereafter we will look at journalism and the content of news programmes.

Organizational strategies and audiences

Up until the deregulation, television news equalled the two public service programmes *Rapport* and *Aktuellt*. Of these two, *Aktuellt* is the one with the longest history. It was introduced in 1958 while *Rapport* was introduced in 1969 at the same time as the second (public service) television channel, TV2. In 1972, the model with *Rapport* broadcasting at 7.30 pm and *Aktuellt* at 9 pm was established and this model lasted for over 30 years.

The idea that public service television should have two more or less separate news programmes and thus a form of internal competition did not go undisputed and the coordination between the two organizations has been more or less extensive. The idea to create one organization for all public service news has been there ever since the launch of the second television channel in Sweden, and at the beginning of the two-channel phase there were some experiments with one main central news desk for both programmes. This model was not long-lasting, however, and from 1972 onwards there were two separate and internally competing news programmes on SVT. The main argument for this system has always been the idea to further quality and diversity. This was expressed, for example, in a state commission report from 1977: *“We think it is a big advantage with a news organization in which several groups of editorial staff are working with the news. /.../We thus recommended an organization where a certain degree of diversity is guaranteed by two separate independent news organizations...”*⁵

The question of whether or not SVT should have two news organizations was once again on the agenda when the monopoly started to erode at the end of the 1980s. Since SVT then faced competition from other television channels, the management of the public service company thought it would be better

to concentrate the resources into one organization instead of two, in order to be better equipped to compete with the external actors. As Sam Nilsson explains it: *"To keep an internal competition that was motivated during the era of monopoly was not so wise when SVT was exposed to external competition."*⁶ At the beginning of the 1990s there were, for example, far-reaching plans on the part of management to merge *Rapport* and *Aktuellt*. This was, however, widely criticized by the news staff who even published opinion pieces in the press to defend their programmes. From the political sphere there was no support for the idea of a merger and no such thing came into place. According to Sam Nilsson, one important reason for this was that things were not going so well for the competitor TV4 at the beginning. *"Unfortunately we have to say we had some bad luck [with the plans to merge Rapport and Aktuellt, author's comment] since TV4 failed at the start. Nobody watched. When the politicians realized this, they were thinking: 'Oh my God, it is still Rapport and Aktuellt that are the main news programmes.' Then they said no to a merger of the two news organizations at SVT."*⁷

Regardless of the lack of political support for a merger of *Rapport* and *Aktuellt*, the management of SVT started a process of increased cooperation between the two in 1992. During this period the profiles of the programmes were made more explicit and focused. Profiling the newscasts and giving them different time slots is a model used by many other public service companies around Europe (Findahl, 2004). The increased cooperation between the programmes was, according to Sam Nilsson, a strategy to meet the increased and upcoming competition from the commercial channels, then mainly TV3 and TV4.⁸ TV4 was the first real competitor to SVT in the news market and went, from the start in 1990, for a more serious profile than the other commercial channels, and in their brand the news programme *Nyheterna* played an important part.

News and current affairs have been considered a core in the Swedish public service institution and are also the content areas with the most pronounced and detailed requirements set for it. These demands have been specified in regulations (e.g. the Broadcasting Law) and in the separate documents for the broadcast permit (Sändningstillstånd). In the television sphere, not only the public service company Sveriges Television (SVT) but also the commercial and private TV4 had to abide by similar rules (cf. Jönsson, 2004). The broadcasting permits, for example, stated that both SVT and TV4 were obligated to broadcast news and that the news reports should be characterized by diversity. When TV4 first started to broadcast on the terrestrial network in 1992 the requirements were very detailed and to broadcast news and current affairs was a requirement for getting access to the terrestrial network. The first permit even stated things like the amount of news TV4 had to broadcast. Politicians obviously did not trust the market to provide a channel which voluntarily chose to broadcast news and other kinds of informative content (cf. Jönsson, 2004).

Nyheterna was part of the main TV4 organization and had, just like *Rapport* and *Aktuellt*, its base in Stockholm (the capital of Sweden). Ever since TV4 started to broadcast in 1990 the channel provided two longer newscasts every day (around 7 pm and 10 pm). For *Nyheterna* it was *Rapport* and *Aktuellt* who were naturally the main competitors. The strategy from *Nyheterna* was to clearly from the beginning define themselves as an alternative to the public service news programmes and they launched the concept and idea of a 'TV4 way' of doing news (TV4-stuket) that was more informal and easy-going in its tone and content. The former news director Lars Weiss describes it like this: "*We chose to do a news programme that, I remember, we called a bit engaged and 'leaning forward', with a different style in presentation and selection of news, where we chose to skip perhaps too much of the traditional broadsheet two-column domestic news /.../ Those things that matter but not so much that it really affects people ...*"⁹ In 1993, one of the programme hosts, Lotta Mossberg, said: "*We have never denied that we lean towards the same principles for news selection as the tabloids.*"¹⁰ This model did not, however, prove to be successful with the audience and *Nyheterna* did not reach the audience share they wanted. After a couple of years in the middle of the 1990s *Nyheterna* instead started to adjust to the SVT way of doing television news and the news selection criteria became more similar (Djerf-Pierre & Weibull, 2001). It is during the first part of the 1990s that we find the most significant difference between *Nyheterna* on the one hand and *Rapport* and *Aktuellt* on the other. After that the three programmes converged.

It is therefore obvious that *Rapport* and *Aktuellt* were considered the main competitors for *Nyheterna*, and the 1990s became a decade of different changes in output, scheduling, content and form, when all the programmes tried to improve their positions. Depending on the different moves and strategies, the level and form of competition have varied throughout the period. In 1993, *Nyheterna*, for example, started to broadcast at the same time as *Rapport* and this new form of competition was described in the media as a 'news war'. Also, the morning shows of which the news programmes were an important part became a strategy in the competition between SVT and TV4. TV4 started their morning programme in 1992 and in 1993 SVT followed.

As a response to the new situation with external competitors, and also as a result of changing technological conditions, the television news output increased immensely during the 1990s with more broadcasts from *Rapport*, *Aktuellt* and *Nyheterna* (and at the beginning of the 1990s also from other commercial channels like TV3), as well as with the introduction of specialized news channels (like SVT24 – a digital theme channel with a focus on news and sports around the clock – which in 1999 was introduced as part of the public service output) and international satellite channels (like, for example, CNN and BBC World). *Rapport*, *Aktuellt* and *Nyheterna* broadcast several times every day, but they all had one main prime time broadcast. Besides these national news

programmes, SVT also provided regional news shows and news for different minorities. TV4 in turn also broadcasted local news. All actors competed for time, attention and perhaps also appreciation from the audience, and the main competition in the television market between 1990 and 2004 took place during prime time. In March 2004, for example, no less than 24 different kinds of news programmes were broadcasted during prime time (18.00-23.00) on SVT1, SVT2 and TV4 (see Table 1).

Table 1. Newscasts on Swedish television during prime time 2004-03-08

18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23
SVT2 18.00-18.15: Aktuellt	SVT2 19.00-19.10 Culture news		SVT2 21.00-21.25 Aktuellt	TV4 22.00-22.15 Nyheterna
TV4 18.10-18.15 Local news	SVT2 19.10-19.30 Regional news		SVT2 21.25-21.30 A-ekonomi (Financial news)	SVT2 22.00-22.03 Nyhetssamman- fattning (news summary)
TV4 Weather 18.25-18.30	SVT1 19.30-20.00 Rapport			SVT2 22.03-22.15 Sports news
TV4 18.30-18.54 Nyheterna and the weather				SVT2 22.15-22.25 Regional news
				TV4 22.15-22.26 Sports news
				SVT2 22.25-22.30 Weather
TV4 18.54-19.00 Financial news		TV3 20.57-21.00 Metronyheter (Short news)	TV4 21.55-22.00 Local news	TV4 22.26-22.30 Weather
TV3 18.57-19.00 Metronyheter (Short news)	TV8 19.58-20.05 Financial news	TV8 20.58-21.00 Financial news	TV8 21.58-22.10 Financial news	TV3 22.52-22.55 Metronyheter (Short news)

Analyses of the overall television output show that even if the amount of television news broadcasts increased during the 1990s (mainly up until the beginning of the 2000s), the share of the news genre in the overall output remained fairly stable (cf. Asp, 2005). One conclusion is that the news output on Swedish television during the era of external competition became more extensive and also more segmented and individualized.

Consequently, in different ways internal as well as external competition affected the activities at SVT and the news organization. There were examples

of both proactive and reactive strategies and these were about issues like the organization of the news work, scheduling and profiling. The main competition before the deregulation was the internal one between *Rapport* and *Aktuellt*, but after 1990 the main external competitors were TV4 and *Nyheterna*. However, after the deregulation there were also those inside the public service news organizations who considered their internal competitor to be the most important and the one stimulating innovations and new ideas (Christensen, 2001). Competition is largely about one actor making a move and the other one(s) reacting and responding to this move, and this was clearly shown in the relation between *Rapport*, *Aktuellt* and *Nyheterna*, especially during the first half of the 1990s.

News audiences

During the period 1990-2004 *Rapport* was the news programme with the highest audience share, with *Aktuellt* in second and *Nyheterna* as number three (see Table 2). The biggest change is the decrease in the numbers for television news overall, and especially so for *Rapport* (despite being the strongest programme during the whole period). Aside from these central actors in the television news market, there were also others like the commercial channel TV3 who, at least from time to time, broadcasted short news bulletins. The main function of these newsflashes was not really to compete with SVT and TV4 over the news audience, but to keep the audiences on their own channel for the whole evening (or day).

Table 2. News audiences for Swedish television for one week in March 1994-2004

	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004
Rapport 19.30 SVT	23	20	19	18	17	16
Aktuellt 21.00 SVT	13	13	14	11	10	12
Nyheterna TV4	9	9	8	6	7	7
TV3 News	2	1	2	4	4	3

Just as for television consumption in general it was mainly young people that chose TV4 and *Nyheterna* as well as the short news on TV3, while older groups and people with higher education tended to prefer the public service newscasts. The latter group was also the one that consumed most news in general while the young tended to prioritize other kinds of content (and other media). Eva Hamilton, director of the department for news and current affairs at SVT between 2000 and 2006 (then she became the MD of SVT), claimed that an important part of the problem public service news had in reaching the younger part of the audience was about scheduling: “*Young people do not watch television at 7.30 pm. If you want to do television news for these groups*

you have to broadcast it at a time when they are actually watching television, which means after 10 pm."¹¹

Content strategies and issues of quality and commercialization

Another way for news organizations to position themselves in relation to their competitors is to work with different content strategies as well as with the form and presentation of the news, and all of this with the aim of attracting the audience (in the right target groups). With regard to television news, media research often conveyed a critical discourse in which competition and commercial media were thought to result in diminishing quality in the news, lack of diversity, etc. This process was often discussed in terms of commercialization of the news and described as popularization and market or audience orientation.

Journalism between market and democracy

Journalism in general, and therefore also television news journalism, has always been changing in terms of content, approach, journalistic roles, relation to the audience and the surrounding society, but at the same time it has also in some ways remained fairly stable. While certain changes can be seen as different phases where one replaces the other, other changes can be seen as trends. Often described in terms of 'commercialization', the deregulation and increased audience orientation meant an emergence of different 'journalisms' adjusted to different audiences. The homogenous journalism that characterized the decades before the deregulation was then replaced by an increased heterogeneity (Djerf-Pierre & Weibull, 2001). The deregulation thus resulted in a differentiation of the norm system and it became less obvious what 'good journalism' actually was.

The model for what is considered to be 'good journalism' is closely related to the idea of (news) media contributing to democracy (the democracy model). This is the journalism linked to broadsheets and public service media that has been seen in opposition to what is labelled 'commercial journalism' (and/or 'tabloid' or 'popular journalism'). Commercial journalism, sometimes also labelled popular journalism, has been said to pander to the lowest common denominator, and to simplify, personalize, focus on sensation and scandal, etc. In the dual, commercial media sphere introduced in the 1990s, the public service media struggled with balancing between the market and the democracy model and conflicting internal as well as external interests and demands (cf. McManus, 1994; Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; Curran, 2005). A question of interest for the analysis in this chapter is whether and in what sense the competition

during the period 1990-2004 affected journalism in Swedish public service television in relation to these models, and whether the public service news became commercial and market oriented.

After the deregulation there was a lot of research (especially in Northern and Western Europe) on how competition and the new market affected the news and television journalism in terms of content and form, and especially on whether and how there was a commercialization (or tabloidization) of television news (see, for example, Asp, 1995; Hjarvard, 1999; Djerf-Pierre, 2000; Sparks, 2000). The concept of commercialization was used to describe a tendency for all journalism to become more like commercial journalism. Commercial (or tabloid) journalism, and also commercialization, as a phenomenon was often criticized and considered as the opposite to 'good journalism' (see, for example, Franklin 1997; Örnebring & Jönsson, 2004). In this discussion there was also an implicit line of thought that an increased (external) competition would lead to commercialization (and in the next step that commercial journalism is bad for democracy). This assumption needs to be qualified and it is important to further problematize and discuss the meaning and implications of commercialization and its relation to market and audience orientation.

For market-driven journalism (cf. McManus, 1994) it is crucial, in order to sell the attention of the audience to advertisers, to provide content that attracts the audience, but at the same time the costs for production could not be too high. This mechanism has consequences for the journalism as described by John McManus: *"rational news departments should compete with each other to offer the least expensive mix of content that protects the interests of sponsors and investors while garnering the largest audience advertisers will pay to reach"* (McManus, 1994, p.85). Hypothetically this means a journalism with a focus on a least common denominator and things most people can agree to watch, but that does not scare investors or reduce the symbolic capital too much. In a situation of an increased audience orientation the content of journalism is thus an important tool for competition.

Theories about commercial journalism are often of American origin (e.g. Hamilton, 2004; McManus, 1994) but the same questions and perspectives have also, since the deregulation, been acknowledged in Western Europe and Scandinavia. According to Hjarvard (1999), market orientation in the media sphere is about (commercial) financing, demands for profit, and competition. Increased competition does not necessarily mean increased commercialization. Increased competition for the attention of the audience leads to increased audience orientation and a focus on what is considered important in the everyday life of individual viewers. It is, however, competition and not market orientation in terms of financing and striving for profit that is the main mechanism behind this increase, at least with regard to public service television corporations (not funded by advertising) (cf. Hjarvard, 1999). This also means that market and

audience orientation can be seen as different forces that may or may not result in a commercial journalism. In this sense it is also possible for public service media to become commercialized.

Several researchers (e.g. Asp, 1995; Hamilton, 2004; McManus, 1994) have provided a number of different criteria for commercialized journalism (the market model), basically capturing two aspects: one about content and one about form and presentation. As can be seen from Figure 1 below, these criteria are of different sorts. On the one hand we see tendencies to adjust form and content in order to attract as many as possible, and on the other hand we see a tendency to spend less on journalism. All in all, this is the basis of market thinking – to increase incomes and reduce costs. Asp (1995), in an analysis of the commercialization of Swedish television news, summarized the criteria for commercialization into four themes addressing content as well as form: shorter sound- and image bites, personalization, trivialization and dramatization. Hjarvard (1999) analysed what happened with the television journalism in Denmark when public service was exposed to external competition from commercial channels, and his criteria for commercial journalism were similar to Asp's: pace in news presentation; a focus on soft and entertaining news at the expense of news about politics and economy; personalization; and an increased audience orientation overall. A decreased diversity can also be considered a part of commercialized journalism, mainly because a diverse (news) output requires more resources. In Figure 1 below, the themes for commercialized television news as presented by McManus, Asp and Hjarvard are operationalized into 12 different criteria which will be analysed in this section.

Figure 1. Commercialization of television news – criteria

Content	Form and presentation
Decreased share of political and economic (hard) news	An increased use of sensationalist language
Increased share of news about crime, celebrities and human interest (soft news)	Shorter sound- and image bites
More room for interesting news at the expense of important news	More publicity for one's own product (self-publicity, branding)
Decreased room for investigative (and critical) journalism	Increased personalization
Decreased room for foreign news	Increased editing and dramatization
Decreased share of politicians (and other power holders) and increased focus on celebrities and individual citizens	
Less use of many different sources	
Decreased diversity	

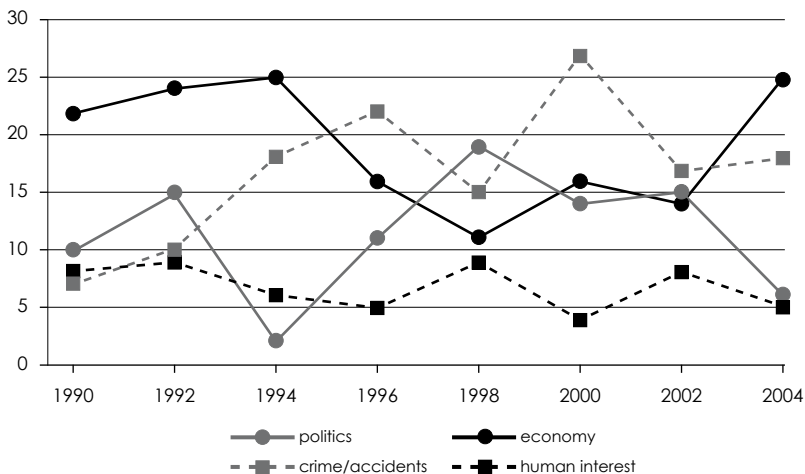
The analysis will focus on the main changes in public service television news between 1990 and 2004 but also discuss similarities and differences between public service television news and the main commercial counterparts. The question is whether or not television journalism was commercialized (i.e. changed over time) and whether the television news during the period was commercial in character. To answer these questions I will also include the commercial channels and compare SVT to TV4 and TV3.

Content and commercialization

As for news content, the criteria for commercial journalism used in this chapter are: a decreased share of political and economic (hard) news; an increased share of news about crime, celebrities and human interest (soft news); more room for interesting news at the expense of important news; less room for investigative (and critical) journalism; decreased room for foreign news; decreased share of politicians (and other power holders) and increased focus on celebrities and individual citizens; less use of many different sources; and decreased diversity.

There are no indications of a decrease in news attention to 'hard news' in the public service news programmes. News about the economy decreased in 1996-2002 but increased again in 2004. As for news about politics, there are no clear tendencies during the period (see Figure 2 above). There is, however, an increased share of news about human interest/sensation and crimes/accidents (see Figure 2 below). An analysis of news values also shows that it seems that the share of interesting news was increasing while the share of important news was somewhat decreasing (cf. Johansson, 2004).

Figure 2. Changes over time in four categories in Swedish public service television news 1990-2004 (per cent)¹⁵



There was also no tendency towards decreased room for foreign news in the Swedish public service news. Throughout the period 1990-2004 the proportion of foreign news was about 40 per cent of the news items and there were in this respect no important changes over time or any real differences between the different news programmes. Compared to the 1980s there even seems to have been a slight increase in the proportion of foreign news after the deregulation (Jönsson, 2004). There was a significant difference between public service and commercial channels in terms of what kinds of topics they reported about. The share of news about crime, human interest and sensational news was higher, for example, on the commercial channels than in the public service, indicating a more commercial journalism in the former. TV3 also had a significantly lower share of foreign news than the other three and it is on TV3 that we found the most commercial journalism (see Table 3 below).

Table 3. Subject areas in Swedish television news 1990-2004 (per cent)

	Rapport (SVT, ps)	Aktuellt (SVT, ps)	Nyheterna (TV4, com)	TV3 news (TV3, com)
Politics and elections	11	12	10	4
Economy and financial news	24	15	12	4
Accidents and crime	15	17	18	31
War and conflict	13	16	18	15
Foreign news	8	10	7	2
Science and culture	6	6	13	13
Social issues	7	5	4	4
Human interest	6	8	10	20
Energy, environment	2	3	2	2
Other	8	8	6	5
Total	100	100	100	100
N	482	526	369	117

Comment a): ps=public service; com=commercial channels.

Comment b): Politics includes domestic but not foreign news; economy includes macro and micro economy, business and financial news; crime includes crimes and accidents (e.g. traffic); and human interest includes soft news with a focus on sensation and extraordinary phenomenon.

Comment c): An analysis of all news items in the newscasts Monday-Thursday one week in March every other year during the period 1990-2004.

There was no tendency towards decreased room for investigative (and critical) journalism, but at the same time this kind of journalism was quite marginal overall. Examples of investigative journalism were found in *Rapport* and *Aktuellt* as well as in *Nyheterna* and there were no changes during the period. There were no real indications of a decreased share of politicians either, nor an increased share of celebrities and individual citizens, even if the share of politicians among the interviewees dropped a bit in the middle of the 1990s. As for the variation in sources, one indication is the number of interviewees in

the news programmes, and in this sense the results do not indicate commercialization since the proportion of news items presenting the voices of three or more interviewees was stable around 20 per cent throughout the period.

With regard to diversity, Jönsson (2004) studied diversity in Swedish television news between 1980 and 2000 in terms of the breadth in the reporting, meaning the extent to which different events, actors, arenas and subject matters are covered within one or more television news programme. The result of this study suggests that diversity in terms of breadth of reporting only changed marginally, but that the changes that occurred pointed to a widening of scope; for example, the share of news from and about Stockholm (the capital) dropped, and the share of women among actors presented in the news increased. Another way to analyse diversity is to use an 'event perspective'. An event perspective focuses on the variation between the different programmes, for example in terms of news selection. Selection diversity refers to instances in which an event or story is covered by more than one programme on a given day (duplication). The analysis of diversity in selection shows that the proportion of duplicated stories in Swedish television news during the 1990s was about 50 per cent (see Table 4). This was an increase compared to the 1970s and 1980s, but compared to other countries, such as the US, the redundancy level must be seen as relatively low. Within the various programmes, this study also found that, on the whole, the public service programmes, and primarily *Rapport*, displayed the highest level of content diversity (Jönsson, 2004).

Table 4. Degree of duplication in the Swedish television news 1991-2000 (per cent)

	Rapport	Aktuellt	Nyheterna	Total
Only in one programme	49	40	47	46
In two or three programmes	51	60	53	54
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Jönsson, 2004

Form and commercialization

An underlying assumption in the commercialization hypothesis is that the form and presentation of news are also adjusted in order to appeal to as many as possible – to catch and keep the interest of the audience. Form and presentation are here related to an increased use of sensationalist language; shorter sound- and image bites; more publicity for one's own product (self-publicity, branding); increased personalization; and increased dramatization.

The analysis does not give a clear picture in relation to these criteria. In some senses the strategies were in line with the market model and the news programmes seemed to become more commercialized; there was an increased degree of dramatization of the news through, for example, the occurrence of

reconstructed images. There were examples of dramatization in all programmes but *Nybeterna* on TV4 was obviously working the most with images and dramatization. The former news director Lars Weiss said: “...we worked and had a lot of younger photographers and editors. Some of them had, for example, experience of video editing, not the technology in itself but with doing music videos and stuff./.../ It was these things that were a part of what we later came to call ‘TV4-stuket’ (the TV4 way)...”¹²

There were, however, no indications of an increased use of sensationalist language during this period. Since the use of sensationalist language is related to news topic and more common in news about accidents and crime, its use was more common overall on the commercial channels. The most prominent change in terms of language was that the programme hosts in general became more personal and informal in their audience address and studio conversations. Such address and conversational styles were thought to create a bond with the viewer and thus lead to success in the audience market. We can find examples of this in all programmes but it was a more characteristic feature of the commercial channels TV3 and TV4. For *Nybeterna* on TV4 it was in particular during the first half of the 1990s that they developed a more informal address and style in the studio. In an example from 1994, the programme host Lasse Bengtsson, after a news item about a group of women who wanted to be like Modesty Blaise, asks the weathergirl if she is envious, and he ended another programme the same year saying: “Happy springtime, citizens!”

As for sound bites,¹³ the result points to stability rather than a change towards commercialization; the news items, for example, became longer rather than shorter during the 1990s and even if the sound bites were significantly shorter during the first years of the 1990s compared to the 1980s (15 compared to 30 seconds), the trend shifted back in the mid 1990s (Asp, 1995). It is also worth noting that sound bites on American television have always been much shorter than on Swedish television. In a study by Hallin from the 1980s, an average sound bite on American television news was nine seconds (Hallin, 1992). One other important change in the presentation of news in the period 1990-2004 was that the length of the image bites¹⁴ decreased and that there was a clear tendency towards an increased pace in the news presentation overall. It can also be concluded that the pace was higher on the commercial channels than in the public service.

Personalization can mean different things and in this chapter it is defined as a focus in news items on visible individuals rather than abstract collectives, like, for example, when *Rapport* in a news item from 1998 addressed the topic of an increased taxation of annuities and illustrated this by devoting the whole item to one particular woman – Gunilla – who was really sad and upset by this decision. With regard to personalization there were no changes and the proportion of news focusing on individuals was about 40 per cent throughout

the period. However, to personalize in this sense was more common on *Nyheter* and TV3 than on *Rapport* and *Aktuellt*.

Working with self-publicity and branding became more important after the deregulation. It was important, for example, to have a clear framing of the programme in order to try to create immediate recognition, and both *Rapport* and *Aktuellt* as well as *Nyheter* on TV4 worked a lot with the graphics, the studio environment, logotypes, etc., and in relation to these aspects there were a lot of changes between 1990 and 2004. In the first part of the period it was mainly *Aktuellt* that imitated the form and aesthetics on *Nyheter*, but in the end of the period *Nyheter* adopted more to the more formal form and presentation of public service news programmes. As a way of keeping the audience interested and making them come back, the programmes worked to create relationships and there was also an increased space for self-publicity (e.g. "In *Aktuellt* tomorrow we will tell you about..."). There was also a tendency for the programme hosts and reporters to become more visible and personal during the period, which could also be seen as part of the organizations' profiling and branding strategy.

Commercialization or what?

To sum up, in an overarching perspective, Swedish television news in the period 1990-2004 seemed to be characterized by stability rather than change with regard to the content and form of the news. The hypothesis that news journalism became more commercial only receives limited support. Generally it seems that the strategies used to compete focused mostly on form and presentation, which has changed more than the content of the news in terms of news values and the selection of news stories. It is mainly the audience address that has changed since the deregulation. The results also point to an increased awareness of product profiling and branding, and these are aspects that generally get a more important role in a competitive situation. Since the output of television news and also television output in general increased so much after the deregulation, it became crucial to be visible in the daily television (and media) flow and to create a relation with the audience. For this, immediate recognition was of utmost importance. SVT seems to have put a lot more effort than before the deregulation into creating a graphic profile with the aim of making it easy for the audience to identify the channel and the programme. To build a close and long-lasting relationship with the audience is a well-known recipe for success in a competitive situation.

Public service television news was certainly affected by the external competition, mainly from *Nyheter* (TV4). On the other hand, *Nyheter* was probably even more influenced by *Rapport* and *Aktuellt*. After a short period at the beginning of the 1990s when *Nyheter* tried to find a new way of making and presenting television news in Sweden, *Nyheter* adopted the main format

of *Rapport* and *Aktuellt*. During the 1990s onwards the three main news programmes kept track of each others' doings, fencing off different moves from the competitors, constantly trying to adopt to a changing environment using both reactive and proactive strategies. However, changes in television news were, of course, also affected by changes in the television medium itself, as well as in journalism in general, both in Sweden and abroad.

Conclusions and discussion

Based on the analysis of content and form in Swedish television news it can be concluded that between 1990 and 2004 there were three different categories of television news programmes in Sweden seen in relation to the dimension of different journalism models (democracy and market). On the one hand we had the public service news, with a rather traditional journalism quite close to the ideals of the democracy model. On the other hand, and close to the market model, we find the different newscasts on TV3, and finally as a middle way (public service light) we have *Nyheterna* on TV4. As noted above, TV4 had similar restrictions concerning their output and content to the public service media, and in some cases (especially at the beginning of the 1990s) even more detailed rules and guidelines. All in all, the empirical evidence lends only limited support to the idea of a continuous trend from an informative and serious journalism in the service of democracy, to a popularized and commercial market model. Djerf-Pierre (2000) argues that long-term development of Swedish television news cannot be understood simply as a trend over time, but rather as different phases, each of which has been characterized by specific practices of news selection and modes of representation, connected to different systems of journalistic ideals and norms (Djerf-Pierre, 2000).

In the long process from a monopolistic one-channel system to a dual system, the importance of competition has varied for Swedish public service television news, but competition has always been present and part of the everyday activities as well as the long-term strategies at the level of media organization, in editorial organizations and among individual journalists. This chapter has, however, focused on challenges for public service and strategies in the television news market and asked questions about how different strategies and forms of adoption have affected the role of public service, its organization and journalism content and form.

After the deregulation the previously prioritized work on profiling the two different public service channels was abandoned and they became more alike in terms of general output, but it was still considered important – especially in the political sphere – to keep the system with two separate internal news desks (Hadenius, 1998). Internal competition was thus seen and used as a guarantor

for diversity and quality while external competition was seen as a threat to the same values. We have seen that there were only moderate tendencies towards commercialization in the public service television news programmes, but what was permeating the organization (and this can be seen from the 1980s and onwards) was an increased audience orientation. There were also changes in the audience orientation during the period in terms of, for example, tone and address that reflect changes in other Swedish news media. It seems that even if the real competition about the audience was not that strong from the beginning, it still resulted in an increased audience orientation due to the perceived threat (Djerf-Pierre & Weibull, 2001). Another way of describing it is, of course, that the Swedish public service media was proactive and strategic. The increased audience orientation was expressed in a focus on branding and audience relations and an emerging discourse speaking about target groups rather than citizens (cf. Djerf-Pierre & Weibull, 2001). An aspect to consider is, of course, whether the changes we see were a result of competition or something else. News journalism is a genre that is fairly stable but at the same time changes take place all the time. One major factor often leading to changes in form and content is technology and we know that there were important technological developments during this period. What affects the development of television as a medium often also has consequences for television news. The challenge produced by the Internet was, for example, met by public service organizations which incorporated these new platforms, services etc. into their traditional activities. All in all, this means that it is difficult to establish the exact role of competition in the changes of television news production.

One argument in this chapter was that competition is not an unequivocal phenomenon and there is reason to stress again that competition should be analysed in relation to different levels and markets. As stated above, the most important market is the market for audience(s), and success in this market is crucial for gaining success in the other markets (like, for example, the advertising market). The importance and role of competition also differ among different levels and the analysis made in this chapter indicates that the integration with the economic sphere mainly took place at the level of the media organization (and less in the editorial work). What has been analysed here is mainly the external competition (i.e. public service media's competition with commercial and private actors), but it must be remembered that public service television in Sweden for several decades before the deregulation had worked in a situation with internal competition between the two channels and also the two main news programmes (*Aktuellt* and *Rapport*). This is one factor that is likely to have contributed to the fact that the external competition did not have more effects and consequences; it seems that internal media competition to a certain extent had the same function for Swedish public service television news as did commercial competition.

Public service television news was affected by the external competition (mainly from *Nyheterna* on TV4), but at the same time in some respects the two public service programmes considered each other to be the worst competitor, meaning that the period of external competition also included an internal competition. Seen from the perspective of the public service institution we thus, after the deregulation, had a situation of what can be called 'dual competition'. In Sweden (as well as in other countries in Northern Europe), public service in this situation of dual competition proved to be resilient due to different strategies and forms of adaptation. In the debate about the deregulation (and especially in relation to television), two main adaptation strategies were put forward, namely convergence and divergence, in this case meaning to become more or less like the competitors (cf. Hujanen & Lowe, 2003). The results showed that *Rapport* and *Aktuellt* both adapted to *Nyheterna*, but that it was mostly the other way around. It is interesting to note that while internal competition between, for example, the two news programmes on SVT (*Rapport* and *Aktuellt*) during the public service monopoly was used as a guarantor for quality, external competition from private, commercial actors was mainly seen as a threat to quality and the role of the public service institution in society.

Notes

1. This means that there will be no explicit references to this book – except from some quotations, figures etc. – but only to other literature used.
2. *Rapport* and *Aktuellt* in public service and *Nyheterna* in the private, commercial TV4.
3. TV4, however, first started to broadcast in 1990 as a satellite channel.
4. *Expressen*, 1999-12-18
5. SOU, 1977 p 202
6. Interview, 2003-01-16
7. Interview, 2003-01-16
8. Interview, 2003-01-16
9. Interview, 2003-05-19
10. *Sydsvenska Dagbladet*, 1993-08-25
11. *Expressen*, 2001-03-23
12. Interview, 2003-05-19
13. The number of seconds an interviewee gets to speak without being cut
14. This is about editing and the number of image cuts
15. Politics includes domestic but not foreign news; economy includes macro and micro economy, business and financial news; crime includes crimes and accidents (e.g. traffic); and human interest includes soft news with a focus on sensation and extraordinary phenomena.

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Reflections

Chapter 16

The Historicity of Central Broadcasting Institutions

Paddy Scannell

A generation ago the media were naturally thought of as contained within and part of the nation-state. Television was the dominant medium of everyday life and its study central to an emerging Media Studies. The media were then understood as consisting of the daily press, radio and television broadcasting—these, with a nod towards the study of film, defined the field of enquiry. Today the meaning of the word has extended to include a host of things that simply did not exist then: mobile phones, the Internet, desk and lap top PCs, tablets (including e-readers), CDs and DVDs, digital games... and more. ‘New media’ is the now accepted term that covers these developments and the study of their social application, uptake and use. Television – so new and unexplored in the 1970s – now belongs to ‘old media’ in the minds of a younger generation of scholars. In large parts of the world back then it had not yet entered into the everyday life of whole populations – in India, China and the whole of the Middle East to take notable instances.

In the formative decades of the television era – from the 1950s through the seventies in North America and Northern Europe – a small number of central broadcasting institutions supplied a daily schedule of programs for whole populations within the territories of the nation-state in which they were situated. In Britain the initial monopoly of the British Broadcasting Corporation gave way from the mid fifties to a duopoly of the BBC in competition with a single nationwide commercial network known as ITV (Independent Television). By the start of the seventies British viewers had three choices: two channels provided by the BBC and one by ITV. In the USA the three national commercial networks (CBS, NBC and ABC) likewise provided the vast American audience with just three channel choices. In Sweden the monopoly public service broadcaster (STV) provided the population with two channels. It was in this decade that the academic study of television first got going on both sides of the Atlantic. It is scarcely surprising that perceptions of its then very new social impact and effect were shaped by the fact that the supply of TV content was in the

hands of a very few institutions whose output was watched, day in day out, by whole populations.

From this perspective viewers were at the mercy of privileged, powerful central institutions who positively and negatively 'set the agenda'. Their output was defined by a principle of inclusion (what was news or entertainment was what was broadcast as news or entertainment) and by a principle of exclusion which defined what was not news, not entertainment. And of course, this was never simply a matter of content. It was strongly normative. By what they included and excluded, these televisions of the center set the limits of tolerance, drew the boundaries of the permissible in political, social and cultural terms for whole societies. In doing so, it was argued at the time, they drew the ideological veil over what they were doing. The work of inclusion and exclusion (the 'editing' of social reality) was concealed in the seemingly transparent access to the social whole that the totality of output appeared to deliver – the whole range of mixed program genres: news, sport, talk and game shows, drama, comedy. The first thing critical television studies insisted on was the constructed character of all this output, whose modes of presentation were designed to conceal that very fact. Viewers were beguiled into taking the partial, selective, edited versions of reality that television offered as if they were transparent representations of contemporary social life. This 'naturalizing' effect (it's obvious; it's natural; it is so) was what Stuart Hall called television's *ideological effect* – a powerful and influential critical interpretation of its role as a central social force in contemporary society that worked to reproduce 'ruling ideas and values' – the dominant ideology thesis, in short (Hall 1977). In the 1970s and 80s this made a lot of sense. Television then was indeed national television of the center and articulated the center's vision of the people-as-nation in its output. On both sides of the Atlantic daily programming (factual and fictional) clearly did articulate a particular vision of a people and a way of life, whose evasions, concealments and exclusions needed to be critically decoded.

That original critique has been updated more recently by Nick Couldry as 'the myth of the mediated centre' – the assumption 'that media are the centre of social life. To believe that is to believe, first, that social life has such a thing as a 'centre' and, second, that media are that centre, or at least the privileged route to it' (Couldry 2003: 4-5). Daniel Dayan & Elihu Katz's (1992) 'highly influential account of "media events" is, in Couldry's view, entirely dependent on that myth's functional assumptions' (Ibid.: 6). So what exactly is the myth? Do societies have central locations that are independent of any media(ted) construction of them? It is a basic point, but one that Couldry simply fudges. Complex historical societies do indeed have 'centres' and they have names – London, Paris, Oslo, Stockholm, Rome, New York, Mumbai, Tokyo, Beijing and so on. All these are real places and real centres of economic, political and cultural life in the countries of which they are major, if not capital cities. It is

in such places that ‘media centres’ are located as Staffan Ericson and Kristina Reigert have shown in their fascinating exploration of the architectural production of centrality. Detailed studies of the headquarters of the BBC in London and CCTV (Central Chinese Television) in Beijing show just how these ‘power houses’ expressively embody the prestige and authority of these televisions of the center (Ericson & Reigert 2010).

The master concept in the critical paradigm is power. From Weber onwards the sociology of institutions has focused on them as economic, political and cultural power centers, and so of course they are. But that is not all they are. Nor is it necessarily the case that that is *primarily* what they are. As I conceive them their most basic *raison d’être* is to hold the world in place through the time of *longue durée* (Braudel 1980), that is, through deep historical time. Central human institutions are devices against death and the ruin of mortality. We (the living) are here today and gone tomorrow, but the world endures. Each generation (and every individual) inherits the world in which it lives from the dead generations who once dwelled in it as we do now. Every generation acts as caretaker of that historical inheritance, preserving and adjusting it to present circumstances and handing it on to the unborn generations of the time that is to come. The central institutions of any country have evolved as solutions to the manifold threats to the continuity and stability of social human life in the long term that the short term character of individual human life unavoidably poses. They are the necessary pre-conditions of any complex human existence – complex, in the sense of being able to endure over great spaces in the time of centuries and millennia. This is the *historical* role of all central social institutions and it is the key to an understanding of all the contributions to the studies of the beginnings and development of broadcasting in Sweden that have been gathered together in this volume. To hold the world *in place* – that is the first point. *Through time* – that is the second point that I will explore in a little detail as crucial to understanding the historical role of national broadcast services and why they continue to matter.

The world in place

A fundamental function of modern media has been to connect people and places everywhere. In real terms this has meant (and continues to mean) connection with the centres of national life, country by country. Radio was the first of the great tele-technologies that have, in the course of the last century, created unprecedented direct and immediate access for whole populations; not to each other (the telephone does that) but to the public life of their own countries at first and then, at an ever accelerating pace, to the whole world. In this they were extending the social (as distinct from informational) role of

newspapers as they developed mass-circulation readerships in the course of the 19th century. Raymond Williams acutely characterized the European drama of the late 19th century (the plays of Ibsen and Chekhov in particular) as seeming to consist of people staring out of windows in provincial drawing rooms 'waiting anxiously for messages, to learn about forces "out there", which would determine the conditions of their lives' (Williams 1974: 27).

The transport and communications infrastructure of the modern world that began to be put in place in the late 19th century was intended to facilitate the management of economic, political and military life. But Williams draws our attention, at the same time, to the hesitant discovery of the wider social and cultural applications of the emergent global communications infrastructure in the era of high modernity. All the evidence, from every country, confirms that for the vast majority of people in the early 20th century the horizon of their lives, in comparison with ours at the start of the 21st century, was extraordinarily limited. People stayed where they lived and a journey of more than a few miles was always a major excursion. On the whole they knew no more than what was happening in the street where they lived, or in their neighborhood or town at most. What was everywhere longed for by everyone was contact with that great and public world, over the hills and far away, that lay beyond the horizon of immediate existence.

Radio broadcasting began on a local basis everywhere. The power of transmitters in the first few years was very weak and the range of good reception was no more than twenty miles or so. Within two years of its startup in 1922 the infant British Broadcasting Company (a private business serving the nascent electronics industry) had a network of twenty stations strategically sited in the largest urban centres of England Scotland and Wales, all linked to each other by telephone land-lines. Each station was largely autonomous, producing most of its own content, while taking some down the lines from Head Office in London. But there were powerful pressures for centralization of the service, particularly after 1926 when the British Broadcasting Corporation was created by royal charter as a public service in the national interest, displacing the original private company. The network was dismantled and replaced in 1930 by a single National Programme produced and transmitted from London and serving the whole of the so-called United Kingdom (Scannell & Cardiff 1991: 277-332). The social geography of Sweden was very different. Largely rural and with a small population concentrated in the south, Stockholm was and remains the only huge city in the country and broadcasting naturally started there, expanding outwards to reach the rest of the dispersed population. But in either case the net effect was the rapid establishment of broadcasting in each country's national centre, although in Britain this was contested and resented by powerful regional centers in the North of England and Scotland.

The formation of *national* audiences by central broadcasting institutions

created something unprecedented: a form of communication that could address whole populations simultaneously. This was what radio first and television later were uniquely able to provide in two key ways: live connection a) between people in all parts of the country brought together as listeners to the same program and b) with worldly events as they unfolded in the immediate now of real time. In the first case it is the broadcast itself that connects people. Sveriges Radio created 'Uncle Sven' (Sven Jerring) as a familiar radio personality for children all over Sweden. *The Children's Letter Box* 'became a mouthpiece for the whole country and via letters children from north to south could come to talk with each other' (Rydin in chapter 5). It was explicitly intended to draw the different parts of the country with their scattered local populations closer together in its regular early evening transmission each Thursday. At a certain point the program took to the road with its travelling bus and in a broadcast from the southern city of Lund, Uncle Sven explained to his young audience how the bus was used to produce the program they were listening to (Rydin).

In the early years part of the fascination of radio was the unlikely new geographical connections it could make for its new listening public – with a chorus of bird song from Lake Tåkern in the Spring of 1931, or with the Danish explorer, Henning Haslund en route to Mongolia and Sven Jerring when he reached Valamo Monastery on a then Finnish Island in Lake Lagoda or furthermore when he travelled around Swedish settlements in USA. These kinds of 'stunt' were common in the early years of radio as broadcasters sought to extend the territorial reach of their new medium via technological experiments in transmission. They had a particular fascination for listeners too who felt themselves transported as if on a magic carpet to remote places beyond the horizon of ordinary experience and the daily round. The loneliness and isolation of rural life began to recede – 'You just grab your radio receiver and – hey presto – just like in a fairy tale you can hear what's being said in Stockholm, Gothenburg, Sundsvall, etc.' as one enchanted listener from the countryside put it in 1932 (Elgemyr in chapter 3, quoting Löfgren 1990: 101).

It is difficult for us today, as Göran Elgemyr so rightly reminds us, to understand how miraculous radio seemed at first. Connectivities of place, so completely taken for granted everywhere today, had once all to be created via technical innovation and new production techniques. The impulse to get the microphone out of the studio and into the ongoing life of the world was a universal compulsion of early broadcasting. Even when actual live coverage was beyond the technical resources of Swedish radio in its earliest years, ingenious approximations were found. Live coverage of the funeral of Prime Minister Hjalmar Branting in 1925 could not be provided. But Sven Jerring and the head of programming followed the path of the funeral cortege by car, noting the mood of the occasion and stopping to talking to some of the vast crowd, numbering hundreds of thousands, that lined the route. That same evening

they put together their impressions of the day in a live studio broadcast for all those listeners unable to be present at the occasion itself (Jerrings 1944: 43, cited by Elgemyr). A decade later, in 1936, Radiotjänst acquired its own recording car which was used for news and documentary programs. Three well known contemporary authors were invited to create sound pictures, via the radio car and its production team, of the Swedish landscape in all its varied seasonal moods (Elgemyr). In these and countless undocumented ways early radio put in a place for a growing national audience a growing awareness of place; an unobtrusive sense of connection between listeners and the wider world beyond the immediate environment of their own situation.

David Cardiff and I have shown that a key function of early broadcasting was to gather up what Walter Benjamin calls 'the scattered fragments of genuine historical experience' and work them into an annual calendar of events.¹ In many part of Europe, and particularly in Scandinavia, the components of a national culture were beginning to converge country by country from the late 19th through the first decades of the 20th century. But the full convergence of these developments, their synthesis as elements of a single corporate national life available to all, awaited the establishment of central broadcasting systems and the quite new kind of public – the general public, a public commensurate at times with the whole of society – that they brought into being. From the early years of broadcasting through to now this general public has been most strikingly manifest in what Dayan and Katz call 'media events'. The BBC's National Programme began in 1930. In the review of the Corporation's activities for that year it was noted that 'the broadcasting of ceremonials appeals, it would appear, to a very wide circle of listeners: it is perhaps the only activity of the BBC to attract an audience drawn equally from all grades of the listening public' (*BBC Year Book* 1930:82).

Quite quickly, in Sweden as in Britain, a recurring calendar of annual events was put in place by broadcasting. It was a mix of the secular and the sacred, religious and state occasions; a wide variety of sporting events with their seasonal fixtures and climaxes; a medley of cultural events; festive programming for public holidays, commemorative programs on solemn days of national remembrance. The particular contents and contexts vary of course, country by country, but the general kinds of event remain the same. Royal occasions will always be a focus of national life in countries with a monarchy. The first broadcasts by the British King George V in 1924, and by the Swedish King Gustav V in 1926 marked the beginnings of royal coverage by national radio and television services in each country that continues with undiminished enthusiasm to this day – at least when it comes to a royal wedding, as the recent marriages in London of Prince William to Kate Middleton (2011) and in Stockholm of Princess Madeleine to Christopher O'Neill (2013) have proved yet again. Sport is the other key event that everywhere binds the nation together.

Again, the particular sports that do this vary round the world. In America it's all about men and balls – football (American football, of course), baseball and basketball. In Sweden geography tells: hockey (ice hockey, that is) and winter sports rivet the population year by year along with soccer and (in the era of the great Bjorn Borg) tennis. Undoubtedly the most distinctive national event in Sweden every year is the annual Nobel Prize ceremony that takes place in Stockholm in early December, with continuing live coverage for the duration of this three day event.

The world in time

Events stand out against the backdrop of uneventful existence. It is the routine character of day to day life that is most basically sustained by the schedules of national radio and television services. In essence broadcasting is about time. It is time that is consumed in listening to radio or watching television. In all actual applications and uses of these intricately connected technologies the question of the meaning of time lies at the heart of the question, '*What are they?*' What are the times of broadcast radio and television? They are quite distinct from 24/7 time and they are manifold: the time of day, of weeks and months; of the seasons and years; public time (the time of the world) and private time, *my* time, *free* time, the time at my disposal, time for television.

The day is a natural order of time in the living world (it is not a human invention like hours and minutes). Day time, night time – each day has an immanent structure, rhythm and tempo around which human life, even today, remains adjusted. Light and darkness; waking and sleeping; morning, noon and night: a natural order of time that is both linear and irreversible through the day and infinitely cyclical and repetitive from one day to the next. Each day goes through the same cycle as every other day. Human life is 'naturally' in the first place and historically and culturally in the second place adjusted to the rhythm and cycle of days. The days of our lives have a natural arc of morning, noon and night which is the storyable arc of our own existence too. Life and days are inextricably folded into each other and show up in the schedules of the broadcast day in which the *historic* and *future* present show up in relation to each other in the immediate present of live-to-air transmission.

The future present shows up as a set of expectations at the beginning of each day. Start-of-day news and indeed all early morning live-to-air programs on radio and television are not just at that time but for that time. In all sorts of ways they are concerned with the day ahead and all the upcoming and ongoing issues that will mark this 'today' as this day in particular. The routine, recurring time-checks, weather and traffic reports provide relevant data that allow listeners and viewers to orient themselves to and prepare for the day

ahead. This is the *future present* of the day today; what lies ahead. End-of-day news broadcasts (BBC1, *News at Ten*, in the UK and SVT2, *Aktuellt*, in Sweden for instance) look back on what was anticipated in start-of-day news. They bring the events of the-day-now-past into the present in live-to-air reports and interviews. This is the retrospective historic present, concerned with what has just-now happened and what it meant and means. It too exists in and for its own and particular time-of-day. It summarizes, assesses and, where appropriate, brings closure to the now-ending day. The weather reports that immediately follow nightly news are oriented to tomorrow. News junkies in the UK, who switch to *Newsnight* (BBC 2: 10.30pm) after the news at ten, know that they will get further discussion and comment on the events of the day. The program always ends with a brief look at tomorrow's newspaper headline stories, thereby indicating closure and renewal – back to the future!

Thus routinely, day by day, the broadcasting schedule articulates and expresses each day in its prospective and retrospective character – its ontology of expectations, its assessments of whether they were met – in the live momentum of the phenomenal now from morning through to night. At the waking break of day, time is all before us and as we move through the day (as we move through life) there is less of it before and more of it behind us. At close of day we can only look back on the day-now-past and look forward to the day-to-come as we prepare for sleep. It is this existential structure of the temporality of dailiness to which broadcast services on radio and television are always and everywhere attuned: to our sense of mornings (and what the cares and concerns of the morning are) and of evenings and their concerns and cares: to the weekend and things to do on Saturdays (watch sport, for instance); to the seasons of the year and what to do in winter and in summer time. If we can meaningfully speak of broadcast radio and television as part of our lives it is because (and only because) their services are attuned to the existential structure of the days of our lives while at the same time connecting each and all of us, day in day out, to the life of the world in its manifest, manifold diversity. This double articulation of life (my life and its times linked to the life and times of the world) is endlessly reiterated in the schedules of every-day broadcasting through the day from morning to night.

So, for instance, in the course of time, for at least two if not three generations of Swedes, Thursday evenings came to be associated with pea soup, pancakes and listening to Uncle Sven and *The Children's Letter Box* (Barnens brevlåda). This association in time was the effect of the programme's incremental repetition, week after week, year after year from its first broadcast in January 1925 to its last, forty seven years later, in 1972. In all there were 1785 editions of *The Children's Letter Box*, and every one presented by Sven Jerring, making it one of the longest running radio programmes in the world. As such it gradually became embedded in the day to day life and experience

of Swedes young and old for nearly half a century. In similar fashion *Doctor Who* became a small but significant element of British national-popular culture for a generation of viewers in its first run from 1963 to 1989, making it the world's longest-running science fiction television drama. Family viewing of *Doctor Who* became a weekend fixture every Saturday evening, with parents on the family sofa and the kids peeking round from behind it. When eventually the BBC decided to move it from that time (its ratings were flagging towards the end) there was uproar. As a tongue in cheek *Guardian* leader put it at the time:

All those who have grown up or grown old with *Doctor Who* [...] know it to be as essential a part of a winter Saturday as coming in from heath, forest or football, warm crumpets (or pikelets if preferred) before the fire, the signature tune of *Sports Report*, and that sense of liberation and escapist surrender which can only come when tomorrow is a day off too. These conditions cannot be created on Mondays and Tuesdays. Saturday will be smitten by the destruction of an essential ingredient, and *Doctor Who* will be destroyed by this wrenching from its natural context. (The *Guardian*, 4 January 1982. Quoted in Tulloch & Alvarado 1983:14).

Imperceptibly, long-running programmes become embedded in the life and times of the present for whole populations. Without our noticing it they become part of the known and familiar horizon of our days, one small thread in the textures of relevance woven into the fabric of collective popular experience. When they are disrupted lives are too.

Broadcasting is folded into the seasonal structures and rhythms of the year. It has long been understood in northern parts of the world that listening to the radio and watching television increases with the coming of winter. Still to this day, the network schedules in the USA are seasonally adjusted. The broadcast year, like the school and university year, begins in the Fall. As the summer vacation season ends and its back to school or college for the nation's youth, the American networks launch their new drama series and reality shows that will run through fall and winter. The comfort of radio and television shows up most evidently in Sweden through the long dark winter and its short cold days. Winter sports on TV through the season are one of the pleasures of Saturday afternoons. There is the annual Nobel Prize ceremony in early December. And after that, there's Christmas and New Year. Every year in Sweden on Christmas Eve, people settle down to watch and enjoy (yet again) *Sagan om Karl-Bertil Jonsson's Julafton*, first broadcast in 1975 by SVT and every year since then. They also watch *From All of Us to All of You*, hosted by Donald Duck – Disney Inc's annual ninety minute treat for the festive season. It first aired in 1959 and has rarely been seen on American television in recent years. But in all the Nordic countries it has been an annual event from its first airing through to now. It

is regularly watched by around 40% of the population in Sweden, peaking in 1997 with an audience of just over half the population.

But perhaps the climax of the festive season on television in the Scandinavian countries comes on New Year's Eve with the annual repeat on television of *Dinner for One* (to give it its original English title) or *Grevinnan und Betjänten* (The Countess and the Butler) as it is known in Sweden. This remarkable television curiosity is completely unknown in Britain although it is British through and through. Originally a two-hand comedy sketch just under twenty minutes long, it was written by Lauri Wylie for the theatre in the 1920s. Freddie Frinton and May Warden performed it many times on Britain's seaside piers from the late 1940s onwards. The pair were spotted performing *Dinner for One* at Blackpool (the Mecca of British seaside entertainment) in 1962 by a German impresario who invited them to bring it to his variety theatre in Hamburg. A recording was made of a performance of the sketch before a live audience in the *Theater am Besenbinderhof* the following year and shown on German television on New Year's Eve in 1963 and ever since – and throughout Northern Europe. It is a slapstick farce, typically shown in its original English without subtitles, for it is very easy to understand, with the same routine and the same verbal exchanges being repeated four times. Everyone know the lines, everyone knows the sight-gags and in spite of this no-one ever tires of watching it. TV audiences in Northern Europe continue to fall about laughing, year after year, at what is, at best, a slight comedy sketch about English class society performed by English actors that the English have never heard of.

Through these and other programmes Swedish national television helps to re-invent the Christmas festive season year after as a sharable public phenomenon, a meaningful experience, for viewers. It is in this way that tradition is invented and maintained through time:

Experience is indeed a matter of tradition, in collective existence as well as in private life....Where there is experience in the strict sense of the word, certain contents of the individual past combine with material of the collective past. The rituals with their ceremonies, their festivals [...] keep producing the amalgamation of these two elements of memory over and over again. They trigger recollection at certain times and remain handles of memory for a lifetime. (Benjamin 1973: 159, 161).

Benjamin mourned the loss of meaningful experience in the era of 19th century industrial modernity. The harsh discipline of the factory working week had stripped the old religious calendar of its many holidays and festive time-outs from work leaving nothing in its place – but work, and more work. In the 20th century central broadcasting services have unobtrusively put back in place an annual calendar of events embedded in their ongoing routine day to day output. It is the play of both that holds the world in place through generational

time for whole populations: the recurring small enjoyments of a favorite daily or weekly programme intercalated with the pleasurable anticipation of upcoming big occasions, such as Christmas. The calendar not only organizes and coordinates social life, but gives it renewable content, anticipatory pleasures, a horizon of expectations. As Anthony Giddens has pointed out, it is one means whereby 'the temporality of social life is expressed in the meshing of present with past that tradition promotes, in which the cyclical character of social life is predominant' (Giddens 1979: 201). Media events are embedded in the public calendars of whole societies (nations) and marked up on the private calendars of individual lives. They are (can only be) delivered by what Daniel Dayan calls 'television of the center', broadcasting institutions with the reach and resources to provide viewing content for whole populations (Dayan 2009).

Conclusion

We will not grasp the full significance of national public service broadcasting if we fail to acknowledge the structurally different public that it created: the general public, society at large, anyone and everyone within range of reception and in possession of a decent receiving apparatus. Events that had hitherto been for particular publics (a football match, a symphony concert, a religious church service and much more besides), now became generally available and of general interest to the new general public brought in to being by broadcasting. This general public is not an amalgam of particular publics writ large. Nor is the general interest that it creates the sum of particular interests. The general interest marks the broadening and deepening of the range of experiences of public life and events available to individual social members. The communicative relationship between broadcasting and its general public exists in an order of time – the living present – that is embedded in the natural, existential arc of days and the cycle of seasons and years. This common public time is entered into by individuals whenever they turn on to broadcast TV services and is the condition of possibility for the formation of the collective memory of whole societies. Generations of Swedes have in common the daily activity of listening to the radio and watching television. Pea soup, pancakes and *The Children's Letter Box* on Thursdays, Ingemar Stenmark and Björn Borg at the height of their powers, the Nobel Prize ceremony, a royal wedding, New Year's Eve and *Dinner for One* – these and much more besides are trace-marks of the shared and sharable experience of what being Swedish has meant and continues to mean in the output of national radio and television. A sense of an evolving common historical life as available, known and shared – that is what has been imperceptibly put in place and sustained through time by central broadcasting services, in country after country, for the general public whose general interests they exist to serve.

Note

1. Benjamin 1973: 187. Cardiff and Scannell 1987: 157-173; Scannell and Cardiff 1991: 277-303.

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Appendix

The Swedish Foundation of Broadcast Media History

An Overview

Göran Elgemyr

The Swedish Foundation of Broadcast Media History was founded in 1993 as the combined result of many efforts. Numerous contributions, often informal, helped pave the way for the establishment of the foundation. From the very beginning of Swedish radio there was interest in documenting its operations, though in the form of anniversary books. In the 1960s, proposals came from various quarters concerning the need for research on broadcast media. The head of radio and television at that time, Olof Rydbeck, was in agreement with this, and at the same time expressed surprise at the very modest research efforts, in quantitative terms, hitherto expended on research into radio and TV (*Expressen* 27 March 1961).

Rydbeck argued that sociological research had important tasks to perform in this regard, but also wished to emphasize the importance of conducting research in the areas of society, culture, theatre, and music. The proposals also found support in the report of the 1960 Radio Commission, which devoted no less than 40 pages to research questions and highlighted the importance of interdisciplinary research: "The body of material that radio and television comprise amounts in fact to an excellent example of a research field in which the social sciences and the traditional disciplines of the humanities ought to collaborate" (SOU 1965:21).

The Radio Commission offered detailed recommendations for different interdisciplinary research activities. The commission also envisioned a mass media institute where newspapers and periodicals also would be studied. But all this fell on deaf ears; the academic community simply was not interested yet. Symptomatically enough, at that time a major research project dealing with Sweden during the Second World War did treat the role of the press, but entirely disregarded the medium of radio. As a result of the Radio Commission's report, Sveriges Radio chose to concentrate on audience research, habits, and studies of current programming activities, establishing a special department for this purpose in 1969.

Individual historical research projects were conducted, however. In the 1960s, literary scholar Gunnar Hallingberg published a seminal dissertation on

radio drama. A turning point came in 1974, when media historian Göran Elgemyr began doing archival research on the controversial programming sector “politics and society”, as well as on the origin and development of radio, radio during the Second World War, production technology, and even the relations between the Swedish radio and the press, as well as with the Telegraph Board. In connection with this, Sveriges Radio’s executive board decided to make all documents older than 25 years freely available to researchers. Shortly thereafter the time limit was reduced to 10 years. In 1980 Media historian Jarl Torbacke secured multi-annual funding from the Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation for a small research team in which Elgemyr took part.

Books, interview projects, and radio and television programmes, all undertaken informally within the public service corporations, generated interest in research on radio and television history. To channel all this activity, in 1990 the head of the public service corporations, Örjan Wallqvist, gave two programme employees, Göran Elgemyr and Roland Hjelte, the task of sounding out whether the academic community had any interest in an interdisciplinary research project on the history of broadcast media. This time the response was positive, leading the following year to a major research conference attended not only by representatives of the research community, but also by programming staff interested in the history of broadcasting, who could suggest interesting research problems and topics. The following year, three major projects were outlined at an academic seminar. The head of each project then selected individual researchers to develop research plans within their areas. Because of the project’s interdisciplinary character, the academic partners requested that the administrative responsibility be shouldered by the public service corporations. To this end, the Swedish Foundation of Broadcast Media History was formed in 1993 by Swedish Radio (SR) and Swedish Television (SVT) with the mission to initiate, coordinate, and promote academic research about the history of Swedish broadcast media. During its first years, the Foundation employed an archivist to assist the researchers in the various archives.

The programme distribution company Teracom, the Swedish Educational Broadcasting Company (UR), and the commercial broadcaster TV4 subsequently were linked to the Foundation. In addition to financial support from the companies constituting it, the Foundation has received funding from the Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation and the Marianne and Marcus Wallenberg Foundation, among others. To ensure that the research is independent of the companies, academic representatives were appointed to the executive board and editorial committees from the beginning. The various editorial committees have thoroughly revised early versions of chapters and approved the final manuscripts. Administrative tasks and the creation of new research projects have been carried out by a working committee in the Foundation consisting

of former head of TV Olle Berglund, media analyst Margareta Cronholm, and editors Göran Elgemyr, Roland Hjelte, and Sten-Åke Pettersson, all of whom work in the public service corporations. At every stage the broadcasting corporations have contributed programming staff to serve on editorial committees and attend seminars, and thereby assist the researchers in different ways. This has resulted in a fruitful collaboration between practitioners and researchers. At the same time, various interview projects have been carried out within the public service corporations, with the results being available to the researchers. Collaborations have taken place with departments and researchers at 16 universities and colleges. A total of about 40 researchers from different disciplines have taken part in the different projects.

The Foundation's first project – called the *Public Service Project* – dealt with the emergence and development of the Swedish media monopolies up to the end of the 20th century, and examined a large number of radio and TV programming areas including music, sports, theatre, entertainment, children and youth programmes, and election coverage. Technology, personnel policy, and administration were also covered by the project, which resulted in 20 academic books and three large popular-scientific volumes. The research project *Broadcasting in Free Competition* more or less took over where the first project ended, and resulted in four books analysing the new media landscape that rapidly emerged after the radio and television monopoly was ended in the late 1980s. It was then natural to continue with the project *Media in Convergence*, which treats trends and tendencies in the changing media landscape of today. It is becoming difficult to maintain the boundaries between the traditional forms of media – press, radio, and television – because they increasingly interact with each other, sometimes in the context of new media companies.

The Foundation has also conducted a research project on the history of educational programming – *The Welfare State, Media, and Modernization*. The aim of the project was to describe the connections between educational programmes and changes in society's welfare and education policies. Seventeen academic books have been published, including a final, comprehensive volume authored by historians Maija Runcis and Bengt Sandin. This final volume has also been released in English as *Neither Fish nor Fowl: Educational Broadcasting in Sweden 1930-2000*.

Over the years the Foundation has published close to 50 scholarly books, many of which are available online. To give some idea of the variety of topics covered, the publications are listed at the end of this book with English translations of the Swedish titles. It can be mentioned here that Nordicom has published in 2010 an English summary of the four-volume work *Den svenska pressens historia* (Karl Erik Gustafsson & Per Rydén, *A History of the Press in Sweden*). The Swedish Foundation of Broadcast Media History and Nordicom have maintained a valuable relationship for many years.

Books in print from the Swedish Foundation of Broadcast Media History 1995-2012¹

The PS-, EiK-, MiK-project

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¹. Titles marked with *are not covered in this anthology

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The Authors

Göran Bolin is Professor in Media & Communication Studies at Södertörn University, Stockholm, Sweden. Bolin's current research interests are focused on cultural production and consumption in contemporary culture industries, and how relationships between these are altered by digitization and marketization processes. E-mail: goran.bolin@sh.se

Monika Djerf-Pierre is Professor at the Department of Journalism, Media and Communication, the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. Her main fields of interest are journalism (e.g. environmental journalism and journalism history), political communication, gender and the media, and crisis communication. E-mail: monika.djerf-pierre@jmg.gu.se

Mats Ekström is Professor of Media and Communication at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. His research falls broadly within the field of media discourse and conversation analysis, with a particular focus on journalism and mediated politics. Other research interests include broadcast history and the role of media in youth civic engagement. E-mail: mats.ekstrom@jmg.gu.se

Göran Elgemyr is a contemporary historian and former producer at Sveriges Radio in Stockholm. Since the 1970s he has made programmes and written books and essays about Swedish radio and television. He has since 1993 served on the board of The Swedish Foundation of Broadcast Media History, which he helped found. E-mail: goran.elgemyr@gmail.com

Lars-Åke Engblom is Professor emeritus of Media and Communication at School of Education and Communication, Jönköping University. His research is mainly focused on journalism and media history. E-mail: Lars-Ake.Engblom@hik.hj.se

Peter Esaiasson is Professor of Political Science at the University of Gothenburg. His research is mainly focused on empirical democratic theory. E-mail: peter.esaiasson@pol.gu.se

Michael Forsman is Associate Professor at the School of Culture and Communication, Södertörn University, Sweden. Forsman has written several books and articles concerning aspects of Swedish broadcasting history. He is currently working with a project about social media and youth and with the development of media and information literacy. E-mail: michael.forsman@sh.se

Leif Furhammar is Film Professor, 1978-1990 head of the Department of Cinema Studies, Stockholm University. He was earlier a TV-producer at SVT, the Swedish public service television company. 1987-2009 media columnist in Dagens Nyheter. He worked as film maker and is the author of several books on film and television. E-mail: leif.furhammar@telia.com

Nicklas Håkansson holds a PhD in Political Science and is Senior Lecturer of Media and Communication at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. His main research areas are political communication, in particular election campaigns and propaganda, and political journalism. E-mail: nicklas.hakansson@jmg.gu.se

Anna Maria Jönsson is Associate Professor in Media and Communication Studies and currently employed as a senior lecturer at Södertörn University. Her main research interests are about journalism and democracy and media and the public sphere, as well as issues related to media and the environment and science communication. E-mail: anna-maria.jonsson@sh.se

Monica Löfgren Nilsson is Associate Professor at the Department of Journalism, Media and Communication, University of Gothenburg. Her research interests are mainly focused on journalism and on gender & media. E-mail: monica.lofgren-nilsson@jmg.gu.se

Bo Reimer is Professor of Media and Communication at Malmö University, Sweden. His research deals primarily with the relationship between media, technology and design in the contemporary media landscape. E-mail: bo.reimer@mah.se

Ingegerd Rydin is Professor of Media and Communication at Halmstad University, Sweden. Her research has mainly concerned issues related to media in the lives of children, young people and family. Specific topics are: media history, media reception, public service broadcasting, migration and ethnicity. E-mail: ingeagerd.rydin@hh.se

Paddy Scannell is Professor and works at the Department of Communication Studies at the University of Michigan. Originally a historian of British broadcasting, he subsequently became interested in the analysis of talk on radio and television and the phenomenology of media. He is a founding editor of *Media, Culture & Society*, now in its 35th year of publication. E-mail: scannep@umich.edu

Lennart Weibull is Senior Professor at the Department of Journalism, Media and Communication, University of Gothenburg. His research interests include media structure, media audience and media history. He is works with the Swedish SOM-institute of survey research, University of Gothenburg. E-mail: lennart.weibull@samfak.gu.se

THE AUTHORS

Nina Wormbs is Associate Professor in History of Technology at KTH, Royal Institute of Technology. Her research in media has focused on ideas of and conflicts around technological change. E-mail: nina.wormbs@abe.kth.se

Director and Administration

Director: Ulla Carlsson
Telephone: +46 31 786 12 19
Fax: +46 31 786 46 55
ulla.carlsson@nordicom.gu.se

Administration and Sales:
Anne Claesson
Telephone: +46 31 786 12 16
Fax: +46 31 786 46 55
anne.claesson@nordicom.gu.se

Technical Editing and Webmaster:
Per Nilsson
Telephone: +46 31 786 46 54
Fax: +46 31 786 46 55
per.nilsson@nordicom.gu.se

Field of Activities

Media and Communication Research

Publications

Editor: Ulla Carlsson
Telephone: +46 31 786 12 19
Fax: +46 31 786 46 55
ulla.carlsson@nordicom.gu.se

Research Documentation

Nordic Co-ordinator:
Mogens Vestergaard Kjeldsen
Telephone: +45 89 46 21 67
Fax: +45 89 46 22 20
mvk@statsbiblioteket.dk

Telephone: +45 89 46 20 69
Fax: +45 89 46 20 50
ckh@statsbiblioteket.dk

Media Trends and Media Statistics

Nordic Media Trends

Nordic Co-ordinator: Eva Harrie
Telephone: +46 31 786 46 58
Fax: +46 31 786 46 55
eva.harrie@nordicom.gu.se

The International Clearinghouse on Children, Youth and Media

Information Co-ordinator:
Catharina Bucht
Telephone: +46 31 786 49 53
Fax: +46 31 786 46 55
catharina.bucht@nordicom.gu.se

National Centres

Nordicom-Denmark

State and University Library
Universitetsparken
DK-8000 Aarhus C, Denmark

Media and Communication Research

Mogens Vestergaard Kjeldsen
Telephone: +45 89 46 21 67
Fax: +45 89 46 22 20
mvk@statsbiblioteket.dk

Nordicom-Finland

School of Communication,
Media and Theatre
University of Tampere
FI-33014 Tampere, Finland

Media and Communication Research

Eija Poteri
Telephone: +358 3 3551 70 45
eija.poteri@uta.fi

Nordicom-Norway

Department of Information
Science and Media Studies
University of Bergen
PO Box 7800
NO-5020 Bergen, Norway

Media and Communication Research

Ragnhild Mølster
Telephone: +47 55 58 91 40
Fax: +47 55 58 91 49
ragnhild.molster@infomedia.
uib.no

Nordicom-Iceland

University of Iceland
Félagsvísindadeild
IS-101 Reykjavík, Iceland

Media and Communication Research

Guðbjörg Hildur Kolbeins
Telephone: +354 525 42 29
Fax: +354 552 68 06
kolbeins@hi.is

Nordicom-Sweden

University of Gothenburg
PO Box 713
SE-405 30 Göteborg, Sweden

Media and Communication Research

Maria Edström
Telephone: +46 31 786 66 40
Fax: +46 8 786 46 55
maria.edstrom@nordicom.gu.se

Karin Poulsen
Telephone: +46 31 786 44 19
karin.poulsen@nordicom.gu.se

Media Trends and Media Statistics in Sweden

Ulrika Facht
Telephone: +46 31 786 13 06
ulrika.facht@nordicom.gu.se

Karin Hellingwerf
Telephone: +46 31 786 19 92
karin.hellingwerf@nordicom.gu.se

Jonas Ohlsson
Telephone: +46 31 786 61 25
jonas.ohlsson@nordicom.gu.se

Director and Administration:

NORDICOM

University of Gothenburg
PO Box 713,
SE-405 30 Göteborg
Sweden

Telephone: +46 31 786 00 00
Fax: +46 31 786 46 55
info@nordicom.gu.se

Broadcast communication has had a profound effect on modern society in the 20th and early 21st centuries. A growing international field of research has examined the historical development of broadcasting within various social and historical contexts, but also has made significant contributions to the understanding of media communication in general. Central topics in this discussion concern the relationships between technological innovations, institutional arrangements, social relations and culture.

This book analyses the historical developments of Swedish broadcasting from the introduction of radio in the mid-1920s until the early 2000s. In relation to international research, it explores key aspects of how broadcast media emerged as a way to communicate over distance, connected to audiences, and evolved into central institutions and socio-cultural universes in society.

The chapters are arranged in five thematic sections focusing on the invention and early development of radio and television, audience orientation, professional practices, broadcast genres, and institutional changes.

The book derives from a large-scale research programme on Swedish broadcast history comprising about 50 studies and led by the “Swedish Foundation of Broadcast Media History”.

NORDICOM

Nordic Information Centre for Media and Communication Research

University of Gothenburg

Box 713, SE 405 30 Göteborg, Sweden

Telephone +46 31 786 00 00 (op.) | Fax +46 31 786 46 55

www.nordicom.gu.se | E-mail: info@nordicom.gu.se



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